



4. Chosen

Age range: Primary

Theme: We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community. This term, we are focussing on creativity, and the content of an exhibition being hosted in Surrey this term: **Threads Through the Cross**, the work of textile artist Jacqui Parkinson. We are mindful that relatively few schools will be visiting the exhibition, so are bringing it right into your collective worship in a variety of different ways. Whilst it might seem strange to be focussing on the salvation story at this point in the school year, we hope that the endpoint of Advent and Christmas will be more meaningful having understood the journey to the Cross. We will also be linking to many 'Autumn term' themes that are a natural part of school life as children settle in to a new term, getting familiar with routines, school values and key events. **This week, we begin looking at the Threads Through the Cross exhibition panels, and each week, we will have a similar section, a short time of 'gazing': no discussion initially, just looking and thinking. Then there will be some questions to think/talk about, and then an opportunity to talk and discuss before picking up on the key word linked with the panel – which is what will link into the life of your school. The panel for this week is based on the story of the Annunciation, when God chooses Mary to be the mother of his Son, Jesus.**



How does this link to your school's Christian vision & values?

Each week, there will be a single word that will draw our focus to one particular aspect of either the textile panel or the story linked with it. You should easily be able to link the word to your school's values, but there will also be some suggestions included in the reflective questions as part of each week's materials. This week, we will think about being **chosen**: what this means when we are asked to do something important or are given a special responsibility or maybe even represent our school in some way.

Resources:

- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation. There are slides to go with today's script, but you could quite easily use some of this collective worship without the PowerPoint if you preferred.
- As always, you can find out more about Jacqui's work here: <https://www.jacqui-textile.com/> There is also a video of her being interviewed by BBC NW News at Liverpool Cathedral, when all three of her exhibitions visited in January 2025: <https://www.jacqui-textile.com/bible/>
- **In this resource, we include a final slide showing a similar piece of art from a different global tradition, giving pupils opportunities to both appreciate diversity within Christianity, and to see how Christians across the world reimagine this story showing Jesus 'like them' (which of course may mean like some pupils within our school communities). You may wish to use this slide outside of collective worship, enriching your RE provision.**
- You will need to....populate this resource with examples of how/when pupils are given positions of responsibility in your school's context e.g. eco teams, friendship buddies etc.
- There are also some ideas for reflective activities / ideas to ponder for use in your reflective areas for this term, listed at the end of the script along with a handy wall chart to print each week for your reflective area. You can find all these as a separate file in our resources area, which may make it easier for teachers to print and use in their classrooms.
- **Reflective prayer activity:** Our world is broken.... Write / draw a thought/prayer on a plaster and stick it onto the world map/globe. You might like to include these in your class reflections during the week.

Gathering:

Slide 1: Use the new greeting for this term.



Leader: We are a creative community. As we gather together today....

ALL: May our thinking, talking and wondering help us to grow.

Here are BSL actions for some of the words:

Leader's words:

Creative: <https://www.signdictionary.co.uk/view/creative?q=creative#title>

Community: (we use the word 'gathering' as it's a simpler sign!) <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/gathering>

Gather: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/gather> (1st video), or use the same sign we use for community as they approximate to the same thing!

Response:

Think: <https://www.brightbsl.co.uk/signs/think>

Talk: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/talk> (1st video)



Engaging:

- **Slide 2: Threads Through the Cross**

Today, we begin looking at the panels that Jacqui will be bringing to Guildford Cathedral this week when her exhibition opens. There will be new panels to look at each week from now until the start of Advent.

- **Slide 3: This week's panel**

Spend a while just gazing at the panel. Relax, and focus on calm breathing.

Let your eyes take in (look at) every detail..... *[leave silence for a short while]*

Now I'm going to use some questions to help us...for now, we're not going to tell each other the answers.

....Which parts do you especially like?

....Which story do you think this is?

....Who are the people in this panel?

....How are the people feeling?

....Are there any words to read?

....Can you find a bird?

Now spend a few minutes talking about the things you were thinking about....and pick out the words 'Call him Jesus – he will be great' to confirm what children might already have said. Also pick out the golden spiral that Jacqui stitches as the reminder of God's presence.

- **Slide 4: He shall be called Jesus**

This is part of the story that we usually think about at Christmas time! Jacqui gave this panel the name **'He shall be called Jesus.'**

[As you may have noticed] It shows two different moments in time – the moment when the angel appeared to Mary and told her that she would have a baby that was to be God's Son..... and then the moment when Mary held Jesus in her arms for the first time.

[Connect this with what pupils may already have talked about]

We'll talk some more about Mary in a moment, but first, let's look at the bird that Jacqui has put into this panel, especially for children to spot!! **This is a goldfinch**, which often appeared in medieval paintings of Mary and Jesus, as a symbol of Jesus as both King (the gold stripe) and as human (the red bits, the colour of blood), so Jacqui chose to put this little bird in her panel as well. We will see other birds in other panels that we look at over the coming weeks, that will be there to show us something important.

Now let's go back to thinking about Mary. Mary was chosen by God to do a very important job – to bring Baby Jesus into the world and to look after him whilst he was a child. It must have felt a great responsibility!! It was something that no one else except her very close family knew about – a bit like a secret mission. When the angel appeared to her, as well as telling her not to be afraid (!) he said **'Mary, you have found favour with God.'** The angel told her that God had noticed her going about her everyday life and had chosen her for this very special role. I wonder what you think God had noticed her doing? *[You might want to talk about this together before recommencing]*

And so these are the words that Mary spoke to the angel: **'Let this happen to me as you say!'** She humbly accepted that she had been chosen and did the very best that she could. I don't expect that she ever thought that so many thousands of years later, we would be talking about her story! I wonder how her story might help us to think about ourselves and our school community?.....Let's pause and think for a few minutes....

- **Slide 5: Being chosen – talk together.** You will need to root this discussion in the context of your own school

How does it feel to be given a special job to do?



Is it important that we try to do it well? Why?

Slide 6: Responding and words for worship

We've thought about the different ways in which we might sometimes be chosen to do special jobs at school. We've also heard how Mary was chosen by God because of how she was doing ordinary, everyday things, and then was given an important job to do in being the mother of Jesus. The Angel said that Mary had 'found favour with God' in just going about her ordinary, everyday life.

....I wonder what we might learn from Mary's example?....

....I wonder how our attitude might be like hers?....

....and what God might notice *us* doing this week?....

[you might want to allow some time for discussion here as well]

And as we'll be hearing over the next few weeks, Mary was not the only one who had been chosen for a very important job!

Opportunity for reflection / prayer

I'm going to pray now. If this is something that you feel comfortable doing, then there will be some words for us to share together. If you don't want to pray, then use the quiet to be still with your own thoughts. Here are the words....

Slide 7: 'Help us to do our best.'

So, let's pray together. If you don't want to pray, then use the quiet to be still with your own thoughts.

Slide 8: If we're given a job to do....

Slide 9: '...help us to do our best.'

Slide 10: Whether we're helping at home.....or helping at school...

Slide 11: '...help us to do our best.'

Slide 12: Even if no-one notices....

Slide 13: '...help us to do our best.'

Slide 14: Amen.

Sending: Slide 15 (NB note different word from last week!)

Leader: As we leave this place & time and go into the day ahead...

All: Together, we create a helpful community!

BSL Together: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/together> (1st video); Helpful: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/helpful>

You already have signs for 'community'

To listen to / sing:

Try some quiet piano music whilst children look at the panel e.g. Ludovico Einaudi:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5mQx-VOXfo>

To sing: Shine (NBD)



Slide 16: Reflective areas – the secret helping challenge

Think: How do you like to help others – at school or at home?

Talk: Where can we help others? How does it feel when you help?

Do: Take up the secret challenge this week – help someone in secret!!

Slide 17: Showing the annunciation from different cultural perspectives



Link to original artwork: <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=59236>, which includes some key information about the artist.

Looking at these two creative interpretations of this part of the story may be something that links with your RE curriculum, reflecting the fact that Christianity is a global religion, encouraging pupils to appreciate the diversity that exists across cultures, traditions and geographical areas. It's important for pupils' wider understanding that they are given opportunities to think about how Christians show Jesus as being 'like them', and that this important story for Christians is imagined in different ways across the world. It also creates an inclusive classroom environment, giving all pupils opportunity to see themselves in the art that they view.

You may wish to consider these questions:

- *What is the same? What is different?*
- *Which culture / tradition does the 2nd piece come from?*
- *Why do we think this?*
- *What questions might we want to / need to ask?*





Chosen.....



How do you like to help others – at school or at home?



**How does it feel when you help?
Where could we help others this week?**



**Take the secret challenge!
Can you help someone in secret,
without them noticing?
How does it feel?**

***At the end of the week, talk together about how
it's felt to go on this secret mission together!***

