

**'BIG QUESTIONS'**

<b>Domestic church family</b>	<b>Myself</b> Why am I precious?	<b>Beginnings</b> Who made the world and everything in it?	<b>People</b> Where do I come from?
<b>Baptism/ confirmation belonging</b>	<b>Welcome</b> Why is welcome important?	<b>Signs &amp; symbols</b> Are signs & symbols important?	<b>Called</b> What does it mean to be called and chosen?
<b>Advent/ Christmas loving</b>	<b>Birthday</b> Why do we celebrate Birthdays?	<b>Preparations</b> Do we need to prepare?	<b>Gift</b> What's so special about gifts?
<b>Local church community</b>	<b>Celebrating</b> What and why do people celebrate?	<b>Books</b> Why do we need books?	<b>Community</b> What makes 'community'?
<b>Eucharist relating</b>	<b>Gathering</b> Why do people gather together?	<b>Thanksgiving</b> Why should we be grateful people?	<b>Giving &amp; receiving</b> What's more important - giving or receiving?
<b>Lent/Easter giving</b>	<b>Growing</b> How and why do things grow?	<b>Opportunities</b> How does each day offer opportunities for good?	<b>Self discipline</b> Is self-discipline important in life?
<b>Pentecost serving</b>	<b>Good News</b> What is good news?	<b>Spread the word</b> Why should we spread Good News?	<b>New life</b> What's so important about new life?
<b>Reconciliation Inter-relating</b>	<b>Friends</b> Is it good to have friends?	<b>Rules</b> Do we need rules?	<b>Building bridges</b> Why are bridge-builders important in life?
<b>Universal Church world</b>	<b>Our world</b> What makes our world so wonderful?	<b>Treasures</b> Is the world a treasure?	<b>God's people</b> Why do some people do extraordinary things?

## THE USE OF 'KEY QUESTIONS' IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

One of the main aims of curriculum Religious Education is to promote a knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to ultimate questions about human life, its origins and purpose. The Bishops of England and Wales said, 'Religious Education is about engaging with deepest questions of life and finding reasons for the hope which is within them' (Religious Education in a Catholic School, 2000)

In RE we want to provide children with 'compelling learning experiences' which demands a more active and engaging approach to learning where children solve something, investigate reasons for things rather than be the mere recipients of knowledge.

By giving the learning in Religious Education direction through the use of key questions, mysteries or puzzles to answer or solve, the curriculum appears much more compelling, imaginative and challenging. A key question should also be relevant to the children's interests and concerns. Topics such as 'Rules' which explores The Sacrament of Reconciliation may not capture the attention and interest of a student in the same way as a question such as 'How do rules bring freedom?'

It is for this reason that a good approach to the Religious Education curriculum is to use key questions as headings for each unit of work. At the end of each lesson teachers could ask what the children have learned to help them answer the big question. The grid suggests some big questions for each topic. They are only suggestions and schools may come up with their own grid. Teachers may even want to approach each lesson or groups of lessons with a question which will help to answer the big question.

