

## Key Stage 4

# Eucharist (Practices)

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Know** the symbolism of the bread and wine at the Eucharist, as referenced in the Bible.
- **Understand** why Christians take part in the Eucharist biblical teachings.

**Students will be able to answer the question:**

**What is the purpose of the Eucharist?**

### PRIOR LEARNING

This lesson provides both an introduction to the Eucharist as well as a deepening understanding, therefore it could fall as a first or follow-up lesson to this topic.

This lesson uses the terminology of 'Eucharist' following the exam specifications. However other terms are used by different Christian churches, such as 'Mass' in Catholic worship or 'Holy Communion' or the 'Lord's Supper' in Free Church worship.

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

#### 1: STARTER: WHAT IS THE EUCHARIST?

##### LESSON CONTENT

Print out a small clipart image of the Eucharist bread and wine for each student. Ask them to stick it in the centre of their books, and write these questions on the board:

1. What is the name of this practice?
2. What does the bread represent?
3. What does the wine represent?

Give groups time to write down what they know. Answers are given on 'The Meaning of the Eucharist' sheet on p. 4. You could cut them up and ask students to align to the correct question before writing notes. Ask in discussion the following two questions, and gather students' impressions:

4. Do all Christian churches engage in this practice in the same way?
5. Do all Christian churches believe the same thing about this practice?

This lesson explores reasons for differences in belief and practice of the Eucharist.

## 2: THE LAST SUPPER

### LESSON CONTENT

- a. Return to students' notes for the meaning of the bread and wine made in the activity above. Ask if they know where Christians get the practice and beliefs of the Eucharist from?

Read the Bible passages on p. 5; 'Eucharist in the Bible'. You could show a painting of the Last Supper, such as by da Vinci, to remind students of this key event. Answer the questions on p. 5.

- b. Listen to some answers to questions 3 and 6 around the room. Students might prefer to discuss questions 7 and 8 with you before they answer:

7. What event does Jesus refer to?

8. Why is this night called the Last Supper by Christians?

- c. Arrive through discussion suggestions to the question: 'What is the Eucharist for?'

### 3: DEBATES AND DIFFERENCES

#### LESSON CONTENT

- a. Return to the questions asked in the starter task. Do all Christian churches engage in the Eucharist in the same way and believe the same thing?

Teach that in 1525 a reformer called Zwingli, ministering to his flock in Switzerland, began to conduct the Eucharist in the local language rather than Latin. In 1547 Luther received the right to offer both bread and wine to ordinary people. In some churches the habit had been to only offer bread, at risk of spilling the wine. Only the priests received bread and wine.

What do these alterations suggest about the Eucharist under the traditional Church? Discuss with the class.

(Teacher notes: they suggest that the Eucharist was spoken in Latin, rather than a local language, and that in some churches only the clergy received the full Eucharist.)

Explain to the class that these examples show that there have always been debates and differences surrounding the Eucharist.

- b. The 'Four Views of the Eucharist' sheet on p. 5 explains three different conceptions of the Eucharist at the time of the Reformation, as well as the establishment, or traditional, view.

(Teacher notes: the traditional Church is now called the Catholic Church. Before the Reformation and the founding of Reform, or Protestant churches, it was the only church in Europe.)

Split the class into four groups. They will take on the Catholic view, or Zwingli's, Luther's or Calvin's view of the purpose of the Eucharist for a round table debate. One or two students will speak, and the other members of their group should ensure they understand their view and know how to present it.

- c. Give groups time to read and discuss the information on p. 6 about their view of the purpose of the Eucharist. Sit them round one long table, or two tables with two smaller groups. Write in large chalk letters across the table top(s), '*Hoc est corpus meum*' ('this is my body' in Latin). Teach that in 1529 a debate was held to come to an agreement about the Eucharist, but Luther started proceedings by scrawling this phrase across the table.
- d. Around the table, display the question of the debate: 'What is the purpose of the Eucharist?' Give the student(s) representing each view three minutes to speak, before opening the debate to everyone on the table. You might like to mark a moment when students can offer their thoughts as themselves, rather than in character.
- e. Use the discussion points raised to complete a written piece answering the same question.

# Meaning of the Eucharist

1. What is the name of this practice?

2. What does the bread represent?

3. What does the wine represent?

**Eucharist:** from the Greek *'eucharistia'* meaning 'thanksgiving'. When Jesus broke the bread he gave thanks for it. Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran churches use this term.

**Mass:** the Catholic term, also used by Anglo-Catholic churches. It is believed the word 'mass' is a derivation of the Hebrew *'matzah'* or unleavened bread, as the earliest Christians, many of whom were Jews, used unleavened bread.

**Communion:** from the Latin *'communio'* meaning 'sharing together'. Paul describes the bread and wine as something shared together in Corinthians. Protestant churches use this term.

**Bread** = the body of Christ

**Wine** = the blood of Christ

# Eucharist in the Bible

## Matthew 26:26–28

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body.’

Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’

## 1 Corinthians 11:23–26

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

## Questions

1. Highlight in one colour references to ‘body’ in both passages.
2. Highlight in the SAME colour references to ‘bread’ in both passages.
3. Summarise in your own words the connection Jesus makes between the bread and his body.
  
4. Highlight in a DIFFERENT colour references to ‘blood’ in both passages.
5. Highlight in the same colour references to ‘wine’ in both passages.
6. Summarise in your own words the connection Jesus makes between the wine and his blood.
  
7. What event does Jesus refer to?
  
8. Why is this night called the ‘Last Supper’ by Christians?

# Four Views of the Eucharist

<p><b>Zwingli</b>                  Jesus’ words at the Last Supper are metaphors only. Jesus was not claiming to <i>be</i> a loaf of bread. Jesus also claimed to be ‘the true vine’ and ‘the gate’, and so is speaking metaphorically.</p> <p>In Zwingli’s church, participating in the Eucharist represented a pledge, or a token of commitment to Jesus and the Christian life.</p> <p>The Eucharist also commemorates Jesus’ ultimate sacrifice on the cross, but Jesus is not re-crucified every time humans take bread and wine. His death was a single event, not to be recreated every time humans take Mass.</p> <p>Because the bread is metaphorical, ordinary bread serves the purpose, without needing to be consecrated, or blessed by a priest.</p>	<p><b>Traditional View</b>                  Now called the Catholic view.</p> <p>A mystical re-enactment of Jesus’ sacrifice, allowing Jesus’s actual body and blood to be physically present in the participants.</p> <p>Evoking the presence of God.</p> <p>Receiving the Eucharist was a way to earn God’s blessing as well as receive God’s willingly given love, or grace.</p> <p>The bread is a specially made wafer, called the ‘host’, from the Latin ‘<i>hostia</i>’, meaning ‘victim of sacrifice’. The wafer is consecrated (blessed by a priest). It does not just represent Jesus’ body, but <i>becomes</i> his body during the ritual, in a miracle called ‘transubstantiation’.</p>
<p><b>Luther</b>                  Luther found Zwingli’s view tantamount to atheism. Jesus spoke the words, ‘this is my body ... This is my blood’, and thus they are utterly reliable.</p> <p>Luther held that the real presence of God was present alongside the bread and wine during the Eucharist. Jesus is the link between heaven and Earth, and his presence is truly felt in scripture and in the Eucharist, not as an abstract notion but as a real presence. (This belief has been described as ‘consubstantiation’, but not in Luther’s lifetime.)</p> <p>Luther held the traditional view that Jesus’ body was physically present in the wafer and wine to be superstitious magic.</p>	<p><b>Calvin</b>                  Calvin argued that Luther and Zwingli were splitting hairs, and that the most important aspect of the Eucharist is that it nourishes believers.</p> <p>In 1540 Calvin wrote the <i>Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of Our Lord</i>.</p> <p>He defined the Eucharist’s prime objective as effecting a union of the believer with the risen Lord:</p> <p>‘... to all sanctity and innocence seeing that we are members of Jesus Christ, and particularly to unity and brotherly charity.’</p> <p>He reaffirmed that in taking the Eucharist the Christian partook of the body and blood of Christ.</p> <p><small>Calvin, J. (c. 1540), <i>Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of Our Lord Jesus Christ in</i> Reid, J.K.S (2000) <i>Theological Treatises</i> (London: Westminster Press).</small></p>

# Eucharist in the specs

<p><b>AQA Practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meaning of sacrament.</li> <li>• The sacrament of Eucharist (Holy Communion) and its significance for Christians, including different ways in which it is celebrated and different interpretations of its meaning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>WJEC Practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse beliefs regarding sacraments.</li> <li>• The role, meaning and celebration of Eucharist: John 3:3-6.</li> <li>• Diverse interpretations of Eucharist with reference to the beliefs of the Catholic and Protestant churches.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Edexcel A &amp; B</b></p> <p>The role of the sacraments in Christian life and their practice in two denominations: the role of the sacraments/ordinance as a whole; the nature and importance of the meaning and celebration of Eucharist in at least two denominations, including reference to the 39 Articles XXV-XXXVI; divergent Christian attitudes towards the use and number of sacraments in Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions.</p>
<p><b>OCR Practices</b></p> <p>The meaning of the word ‘sacrament’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role and meaning of the sacraments.</li> <li>• The role of Eucharist in the life of a Christian.</li> <li>• Common and divergent attitudes towards the practice and meaning of the Eucharist.</li> <li>• Common and divergent attitudes towards the sacraments, including which practices are considered by different Christian denominations to be a sacrament.</li> <li>• Different interpretations and emphases given to sources of wisdom and authority.</li> </ul>		<p><b>OCR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matthew 26:26-28</li> <li>• Matthew 3:13-17</li> <li>• 1 Corinthians 11:23-26</li> </ul>