

# Summer 2 - Week 8 RE

## Lesson 1

Can I understand myths and misconceptions about Christianity?

Our new topic for RE this half term is looking at how there are common myths and misconceptions about major religions.

Most of these ideas which are misunderstood come from people who do not practise the religion themselves and might not understand how the religion worships or believes.

This lesson we are looking at the misconceptions people have about Christianity as a religion.

Christianity itself is the largest religion in the world with 2.3 billion followers. This does mean however that almost 5 billion people are not Christians and can misunderstand the religion.



The Christian cross

# **Misconception - All Christians believe the same.**

It is often mistaken that Christians all believe exactly the same ideas about their religion. To some outside the community all Christians have exactly the same beliefs and worship the same way.

# **This is not true.**

Beyond a basic belief that Jesus is divine and attending church, Christians hardly agree on anything else.

Common practices such as baptisms, communions, confession and even how to worship are debated by different groups of Christians.

# Different types of baptism.



A Catholic baptism of a baby, by wetting the head with Holy water.

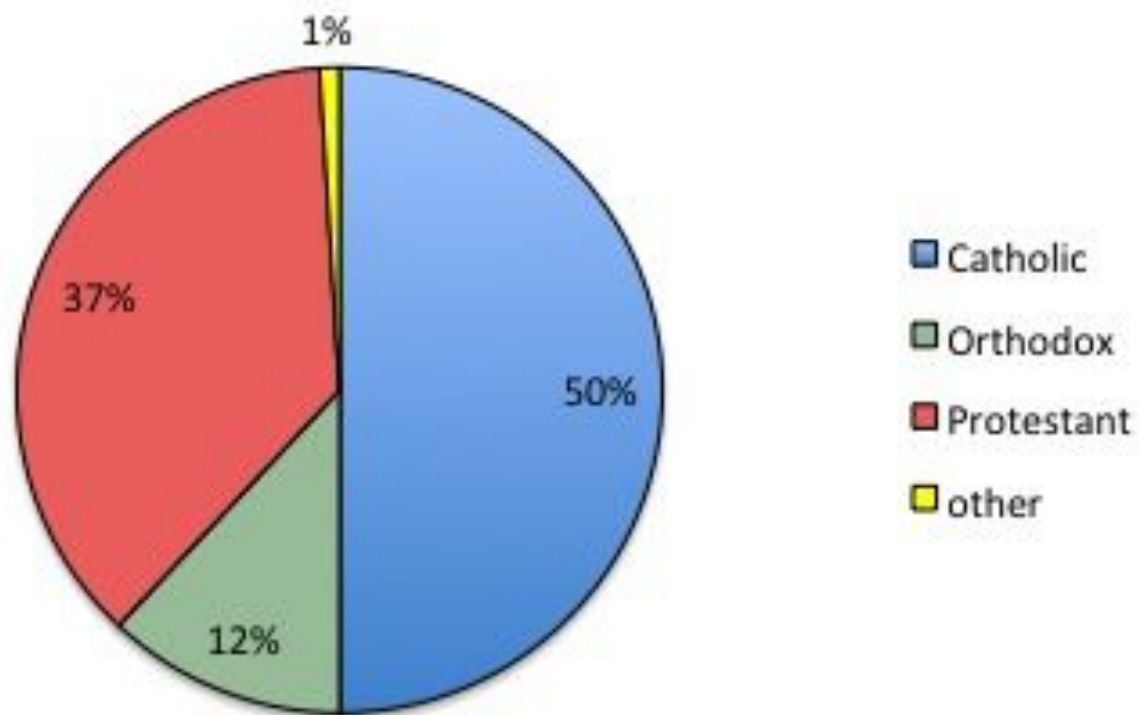


An Orthodox Christian baptism of a baby using immersion fully in the font.

Christianity as a religion is divided into groups called denominations, each group has their own beliefs. It has been suggested that there are over 33,000 different denominations in Christianity.

The main two denominations are Catholics and Protestants. Whilst the people who worship in these denominations would be called Christians they have very different beliefs to each other.

## Global Christianity





# A quick look at the differences.

## Catholic

- Churches are highly decorated with paintings and statues to honour God.
- Bible and church services in latin for thousands of years
- Believe the Pope is the head of the Church and religion.
- The Pope has the power to forgive people's sins.

## Protestant

- Churches are plain and simple to allow concentration on the words of the minister.
- Bible and church services in languages that the people could understand.
- Do not recognise that the Pope is the head of the church or religion.
- Only God can forgive people's sins.

# Catholic Church



# Protestant Church



So as we can see, even just two parts of Christianity have very different views about how their religions works. Christianity is made up of different cultures, ethnicities, doctrines, traditions, practices, theologians and practices—one of the most diverse religions in the entire world.

It shows it really is a myth that all Christians believe the same.

# **Misconception - Christianity is anti-science.**

Christianity is often stereotyped as being anti-science, with people often believing that Christians won't accept any scientific ideas.

# **This is not true.**

The reality is that many Christians embrace science and the exciting discoveries that it includes. Most Christians highly value the contributions of science to the modern world. They are not opposed to modern medicine, Global warming, and environmentalism.

There are *some* Christians who have a strong opinion against science but they are not common in the religion.

Most Christian's see that science doesn't address things that concern faith in Christ. Chemistry and medicines, speed of light, the size of the Sun or the biology of a cheetah have very little to do with their beliefs and faith in God.

There are elements of science that overlap with Christianity in some aspects. The way the Earth was made has been described by both groups which can add to the idea that Christians are anti-science, but this is one small part of science and one part of their religion. It is not the foundation of Christianity as an entire group being against science as an entire topic.

Some well known scientists were Christians.

Isaac Newton the physicist who discovered gravity was a Christian.



Isaac Newton

Louis Pasteur who discovered pasteurisation and worked with principles of vaccination was a Christian.



Louis Pasteur

Gregor Mendel who founded the science of genetics was a Christian monk while doing his experiments.



Gregor Mendel



Your task. Over this unit we are going to make our own 'folio style' project for myths and misconceptions in religion.

Taking an A4 piece of paper, or a page in your writing book, split the space into 3.

In one third of the page we will write about Christianity.