

## Christianity: Life Journeys and Rites of Passage

### Practices and Ways of Life

- Christians believe that God guides and supports them on life's journey
- Christians mark times of transition in life with celebrations or **rites of passing**.

### Identity, diversity and belonging

- Christians show their **Christian identity** by taking part in special ceremonies.
- Different Christian **denominations** have variations on these ceremonies and rites of passage
- Christians may wear Christian symbols such as **the cross** or **ichthus** (the fish symbol) to show their Christian identity.



### Baptism / Christening



- Infant baptism or christening brings the new baby into the membership of the church.
- Baptism was practised in Judaism before being adopted by Christianity.

- Parents and God parents agree to guide a child to be a Christian.
- Water is poured over the baby's head.
- The minister says: "I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
- **Diversity:** The Baptist Church leaves baptism until adolescence so that a person may decide for themselves whether to commit.

### Confirmation

- shows commitment to the Church.
- often during the teenage years
- the candidates renew their baptismal promises
- the bishop lays his hand on the head of each of the candidates and he might **anoint** their forehead with holy oil
- the kiss of peace, a traditional Christian greeting, is exchanged
- Anglicans, Methodists and Roman Catholics all practise Confirmation.
- For Anglicans and Methodists, Confirmation enables the candidate to become a full member of the church and to receive **Holy Communion**.
- **Diversity:** The Baptist and Pentecostal **Believer's Baptism**. They use total immersion to imitate the example of Jesus who was baptised by John the Baptist in the River Jordan



### Marriage



- For Christians, marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman.
- takes place in the presence of a priest or minister who represents the presence of God,
- the couple meet in a church or place of worship
- readings from the Bible take place
- the bride and groom take their **marriage vows**

- the bride and groom often exchange rings as a sign of their endless love



### Death / Funerals

- Christianity promises eternal life for all believers.
- The body is buried or cremated.
- A prayer and reading from the Bible.
- Someone may give a **eulogy** for the deceased.
- The body is commended to God.
- If the body is buried, mourners may be invited to put a handful of soil into the grave.
- **Diversity:** Roman Catholics and Anglicans may sprinkle the grave with holy water.

### Key Vocabulary

<b>anoint</b>	To rub water or oil on a person as a ceremony of blessing.
<b>denomination</b>	A group within a religion. Christian denominations include, for example, Roman Catholic and Anglican denominations.
<b>eulogy</b>	A speech at a funeral outlining the good deeds and values of the person who has died.
<b>Holy Communion</b>	Church service recalling the last meal of Jesus.
<b>ceremony</b>	a formal event such as a wedding.
<b>cremated</b>	Burned. This refers to disposal of a dead body by burning it rather than burying it.
<b>baptism / christening</b>	ceremony involving immersion in, or sprinkling of water marking the start of Christian life.
<b>Believer's Baptism</b>	The baptism of people who are old enough to understand the meaning of the rite.
<b>vows</b>	A sacred promise.

