



Resource 1: Images and description of Christian rituals

Christian Wedding

At the start of a Church of England wedding ceremony the priest reminds the congregation of the beliefs and values of a Christian marriage. Then the couple promise before God to love and support each other and exchange rings as tokens of their fidelity and love. The priest declares that they are now husband and wife and offers prayers for the new couple. Bible readings and sometimes a sermon (a moral/religious talk usually based on a biblical passage) follow, before the couple and the witnesses sign the register – a legal requirement of the marriage.

Flowers are generally part of the church decoration and the bride usually carries a wedding bouquet throughout the ceremony.



Church wedding floral displays.
By James Pickett





Wedding bouquet. *By ytfelmi*



Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday is a Christian ritual that takes place on the Sunday before Easter Sunday and marks the start of Holy Week. It reminds Christians of the journey Jesus made to Jerusalem before his Crucifixion. Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, a beast of burden, showing that he had come in peace and humility. People hoped that Jesus was the Saviour, the Messiah prophesied in the Bible, and they welcomed him by waving palm branches and throwing them down in the donkey's path.

Palm Sunday is both a happy and a sad day. Christians are happy because they are singing praises to Jesus but also sad because they know that Jesus died less than a week after his arrival in Jerusalem.

In churches every Palm Sunday, Christians are given crosses made from palm leaves. Left-over palm crosses are kept to be burned, so that their ashes can be used the following year in a special service on the first day of Lent (Ash Wednesday), when worshipper's foreheads are marked with ash. Ashes are an ancient Middle Eastern symbol of repentance.



Palm leaves from church folded into crosses. *By Kreg Steppe*



Palm Sunday at the
Basilica del Santo
Niño, Philippines.
By dbgg1979



Palm Sunday at the Basilica del Santo Niño, Philippines. *By dbgg1979*



Christian funeral

When a Christian dies, it is regarded as the end of his/her life on earth. A funeral ceremony is held for friends and family to grieve for the person who has died and give thanks for their life. The ceremony includes readings and sermon, personal readings from the priest and a family member or friend, prayers, silent time for reflection on the deceased, farewell and burial or cremation of the coffin with the body.

Various flowers are used in funerals as decoration and to commemorate the person who died. **Lilies** (*Lilium sp.*) are a common sympathy flower and they symbolise that the soul of the departed has received restored innocence after death. **White lilies** (*Lilium candidum*) in particular are also a symbol of majesty and purity, two elements represented at funerals. **Carnations** (*Dianthus caryophyllus*) is another common sympathy flower. Red carnations symbolise admiration for the deceased, pink carnations symbolise remembrance and white carnations are a symbol of innocence and pure love.



Flower wreaths in Christian funeral. *By anythingbutordinaryinst*



Resource 2: 'Mystery activity'

Jane was a Christian. How should she be remembered with flowers and plants?

<p>It is traditional to show your respect for the dead by offering a wreath or other floral tribute, especially at a funeral.</p>	<p>Jane's parish priest does not like fake flowers on graves in the church yard and has put up a notice to make this clear.</p>
<p>Jane always tried to buy Fairtrade products because she wanted to treat other people as she would like to be treated herself.</p>	<p>Fresh flowers wilt away and die very quickly and need to be replaced regularly or otherwise they look miserable.</p>
<p>It is a waste of money to buy flowers to remember the dead and so it is much better to give to a suitable charity instead.</p>	<p>Jane's partner is a Humanist and is in favour of woodland burials.</p>
<p>The local florist is struggling to keep her business alive as it is often cheaper to buy flowers and plants from the supermarket.</p>	<p>Jane's middle name was Lily and she collected postcards of any paintings which featured them, especially religious ones.</p>
<p>Jane's mother is an accomplished arranger of silk flowers.</p>	<p>Some of Jane's friends want to collect money to sponsor the planting of a tree in her name at her local Botanic Garden.</p>



Resource 3: Images of the Annunciation and background information

The Annunciation, is a Christian celebration of the announcement by the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus, the Son of God.

The Annunciation is celebrated by many Christians on 25th of March every year, nine full months before Christmas.

The Annunciation has been a popular topic in Christian art, especially during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and many great masters painted that religious scene to decorate churches.



The Annunciation, by Sandro Botticelli (1489-1490).



The Annunciation by Filippo Lippi (1443)



Annunciation by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1850).



Resource 4: Images of Puja and background information



Lakshmi puja: the statue of Lakshmi is decorated with garlands of flowers including the Lotus flower (*Nelumbo nucifera*) which is considered as Lakshmi's most representative flower. *By Saugat22*



Durga puja: A domestic Durga puja with offerings of cooked food, fruits, flowers, leaves of medicinal & edible plants, sandalwood paste, vermillion with oil lamps and for the worship of the Goddess.

By Lokendra Nath Roychoudhury



Domestic puja: Puja to begin living in a new apartment.
By Graham Hills



Dashain festival puja:
During the Dashain festival puja drivers conduct the ritual to ensure that their vehicles will run well and meet no accidents in the coming year. Flowers, incense, vermilion, raw egg and coconut milk are just some of the ingredients for this puja.
By Eileen Delhi



Flowers are used in various ways in Hinduism as an important offering to the deities. They are used during puja at home, temples and at sacred places. Garlands of flowers and leaves are also used to decorate the statue or image of a deity in temples and home. They are placed at the feet of the deity and the deity's statue is also showered with flowers. Some flowers are associated with particular deities.



Lotus flower (*Nelumbo nucifera*): For a video introduction to the ritual of Puja visit:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/puja/4799.html>

By T.Voekler



Web links to download the pictures included in 'The roots of ritual' lesson resources:

Christian wedding

Church Floral display for wedding

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/fjp/2885385141/in/photostream/lightbox/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/fjp/2885387117/sizes/l/in/photostream/>

Wedding bouquet

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ytfelmi/3967633848/sizes/o/in/photostream/>

Palm sunday

Palm leaves from church folded into crosses

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/spyndle/442507486/sizes/o/in/photostream/>

Palm Sunday at the Basilica del Santo Niño, Philippines

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dbgg1979/5628112502/sizes/l/in/photostream/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dbgg1979/5627969692/sizes/l/in/photostream/>

Christian funeral

Flower wreaths in Christian funeral

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ordinarygirl/3111752521/lightbox/>

The Annunciation by Sandro Botticelli

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sandro_Botticelli_080.jpg

Annunciation by Dante Gabriel Rossetti

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rossetti_Annunciation.jpg

The Annunciation by Filippo Lippi

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Fra_Filippo_Lippi_014.jpg

Lakshmi puja

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Lakshmiwiki.JPG>

Durga puja

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/lokenrc/240549670/sizes/z/in/photostream/>

Domestic puja

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/grahamhills/4143220645/sizes/l/in/photostream/>

Dashain festival puja

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/eileendelhi/50443568/sizes/o/in/photostream/>

Lotus flower

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sacred_lotus_Nelumbo_nucifera.jpg

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