

# Plumtree St Mary Triptych

**Aim:** To explore the church

**Objective:** Children will have the opportunity to look round the church and will encounter the term 'triptych'.

**Curriculum links:**

KS1 Visiting places of worship

KS2 Symbols and religious expression

**Activity:** The children will look in detail at the triptych. They will have the opportunity to look round the church and record on their own triptychs, their responses to what they see.

**Resources:**

A3 or A4 paper, cut in half longwise and then folded into three

Pencils

## Information for Leader

This triptych is a copy of one in Cologne Cathedral by Stephan Lochner. It shows the adoration of the Magi in the centre, with St Ursula on the left and St Jerome on the right.

## Introduction (15 mins)

- Start with the children sitting in the pews. Ask them to look around the church and see if they can find something that comes in a three. Hear one response then ask the children to walk around and see how many things they can find that come in threes. Remind them about not running as they look.

## Activity (30 mins)

- Bring the children back together and listen to some of the things they have found. If they don't mention it, ask if anyone noticed the three pictures behind the screen, near the altar. Move the children so they can see the triptych. Even the name of this includes a clue about there being three; it is called a triptych. The word triptych comes from the Greek for three-fold (*tri* = three, *ptyssō* = to fold). Older pupils will recognise tri- as relating to three from triangle. Check the children can see how it folds into three. Look at the picture and ask the following questions:
  - What is the picture in the middle? Why do you think they wanted this picture in church?
  - What colours are used in the pictures? Why do you think these colours are used?
  - Where is gold used? Why?
  - Who do you think the people in the smaller pictures might be?
- A triptych is a device used in art, and particularly in churches. The most important part of the picture is placed in the middle, and related pictures, or marginal scenes of the main picture, in the other two spaces. So, here we have the nativity in the middle.
- The children can then make their own triptychs. On the outside they can draw the outside of the church. In the centre they can draw the inside of the church. In the right-hand wing they can write what they have learned today and how being in church makes them feel. In the left-hand wing they can write or draw something they have seen today they would like to know more about.



heritage learning welcome



## Plenary (5 mins)

- Ask a few children to share what they said or drew about how they have felt being in church. Allow a few moments quiet while the children think about this.

## Extension

- The children can explore further the things they highlighted on their triptychs as things they would like to know more about.

- Look at other examples of triptychs. What is the important message each is trying to get across?

Examples in Nottinghamshire:

- <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/cinderhill/hfitting.php#triptych>
- <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/nottingham-st-peter/hfitting.php>
- <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/newark-st-mary/hfitting.php>
- <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/carlton-in-lindrick/hfitting.php>
- <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/collingham-north/hpics.php>
- <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/nottingham-st-mary/hfitting.php>
- <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/whatton/hfitting.php#reredos>

- Children can create their own triptychs based on stories they know from the Bible.