

# Who are religious leaders?



Year 7 Religious Education  
Topic: Religious Leaders

## What have we learnt so far?

1. The story of Jesus in Christianity
2. His role as the Messiah
3. The qualities Jesus possessed that allowed him to receive followers of his example
4. The qualities Jesus possessed that made him a great leader

# What will your progress look like?

- Continue exploring qualities that good leaders need
  - Identify and explore qualities that good leaders need
- Learn the difference between an ordained and lay person in religious communities
  - Research the different types of ordained people in six religions and create a glossary of the key words you discover
- We will study what religious leaders do in their jobs
  - You will rank their responsibilities in order of importance and then write a job advertisement for a religious leader

# What qualities make a good leader?

Below these images (or in your book) brainstorm some qualities that you think makes a good leader (use the pictures to help you but remember; you might not always agree someone has good leadership qualities...)



# What qualities make a good leader?

Did you include:

## An ability to motivate others

Good leaders create trust in their followers and encourage them to work together. They make each person feel capable and strong

## A willingness to challenge

Good leaders want to change things. Not everyone wants change, but good leaders will fight for their cause

## Passion for the cause

Passion is infectious. Other people feel the passion of good leaders and share their enthusiasm

## Vision

Good leaders want to make a difference, and they know how to go about it. They have a clear image of how things can change for the better

## Doing the right thing

Good leaders have high standards. They know what is right, and will put every effort into achieving it

In your books, **write a short summary** of what it takes to be a good leader

# So, who are religious leaders?

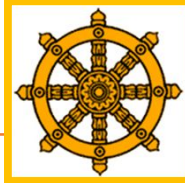


Ordained leader – a vicar!

Some religions distinguish between **ordained** and **lay** leaders

- Someone who is **ordained** has been appointed to do a particular job in a religious community – they get special training and are officially recognised in their role – it will be their full-time job
  - Examples: vicars/priests/rabbis/imams
- **Lay** people are members of a faith community who are not professional religious leaders but do have responsibilities – they are usually volunteers

# So, who are they?



## Buddhism

**Ordained** Buddhists are called **bhikkhus** (monks) or **bhikkunis** (nuns). They have different roles in different Buddhist traditions. They live in monasteries and look after the spiritual needs of **lay** people in the local community. In return, the lay community supports them with food, clothing and money



## Christianity

**Ordained** leaders in different **denominations** have different titles and roles. In the Anglican, Catholic and Orthodox Churches, leaders who conduct services and look after **lay** people are called **priests**. **Priests** are looked after by **bishops**. In Protestant Churches, ordained leaders may be called **ministers** or **pastors**



## Judaism

The leader of a **synagogue** is a **lay** person, called the **president**. **Ordained** leaders are called **rabbis**. A **rabbi** is a teacher of the **Torah** and is trained to lead the Jewish community in their faith

# So, who are they?



## Sikhism

The **Guru Granth Sahib** (Sikh holy book) is the teacher of Sikhs; there are no leaders and everyone is equal.

**Gurdwaras** are managed by a committee of representatives and the committee appoints a **granthi** who is responsible for looking after the **Guru Granth Sahib**



## Hinduism

Traditionally, people born into the **Brahmin** caste were given the responsibility of keeping the sacred texts and performing religious rituals. Today, not all **Brahmins** are religious leaders. There are many types of people who are regarded as having religious authority, including gurus, yogis, swamis, pandits, acharyas, **Sadhus** and rishis



## Islam

Community leaders are called **imams**. They lead prayers and give sermons in the **mosque**. There is no system of ordination in Islam. An **imam** is someone who is recognised as being knowledgeable about Islam and able to lead

# To begin – Glossary Page

- Using the “Who are they?” fact sheets on the previous two pages, create a glossary of key words from this workbook so far.
- Use all the bold words from the information sheets

## *For example:*

- **B**
  - ***bhikkhus*** – *Buddhist monks* / ***bhikkunis*** - *Buddhist nuns*
  - ***Brahmins*** – *Hindu caste that traditionally given responsibility for keeping the sacred text*
  - ***Bishops*** – *ordained people in Christianity*
- **G**

*And so on...*



# What do religious leaders do?

Religious leaders have responsibility for the care of their **congregation**

They look after people's everyday needs, both practical and religious

They lead rituals and services so that people can worship

They try to help people who are troubled or are having difficulties with their faith

They try to stand out as examples of living correctly in their faith

They interpret religious teachings to make them relevant to their congregation

They may try to attract new members to their congregation

**Task 1:** Rank these responsibilities in order of importance. Mark the one that you think is most important number 1, and so on down to 6.

**Then** - explain in your exercise books or paper why you think number one is the most important...

## Key word:

**congregation** - a group of people gathered for worship

# What do religious leaders do?

## Task 2

Choose one of the religious leader positions you have learned about previously in this booklet – create a job advertisement to recruit a leader for a particular religious community – you should describe the duties the person will be expected to carry out and some of the personal qualities they will need to have.

(Use the information from the previous tasks to help you!)



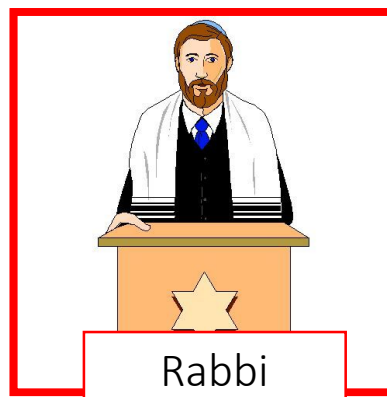
Bhikkhus & bhikkhunis



Imam



Priest



Rabbi

**Sentence starter:** “We are pleased to announce that we have a job vacancy for.....(*job position*) in our local.....(*holy building*)”

# What have we learnt?



Complete the following questions/tasks in full sentences:

1. Identify some qualities that make a good leader
2. What is the difference between an ordained person and a lay person?
3. What are the titles of the different ordained people from the six religions we've covered?
4. Identify some of the responsibilities that religious leaders have

# What will your progress look like?

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# Deeper learning

**Research** a real life or historical leader of religion of your choice.

Create a **poster OR power point** presentation illustrating and highlighting their leadership qualities.

**TIP:** Use the fact sheets provided in this booklet to help your research – they will show you the names of the leadership roles you can explore!