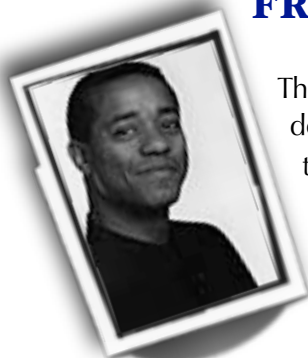


# SACRE NEWS



Issue 33

## FROM THE CHAIR...



The New Year has seen no slow-down in the pace of the battle to secure the place of RE in the school curriculum. NASACRE, together with partner organisations within the RE Council had lent its weight to lobbying for a review of RE in parallel to the reviews proposed for National Curriculum subjects. January 2012 saw the early unveiling of Government's initial thinking on the national curriculum review and Nick Gibb, School's Minister, wrote to the RE Council saying that ministers did not see this idea as a matter for central intervention. Government's view is that **those with responsibility at the local level should be free to choose the RE curriculum that is right for the communities they serve** and that, *"central prescription and the uniformity it implies do not necessarily produce the best outcomes"*.



NASACRE will be working actively within the RE subject community to **help develop a framework for RE provision**. The RE Council, which has been encouraged to lead this work, is taking steps to ensure that it receives appropriate support from Government in this huge task. The aim is to establish a framework on which schools and Agreed Syllabus Conferences can draw and which is consistent with Government thinking on the National Curriculum.

As Agreed Syllabuses themselves come up for review the NASACRE advice of 2011 continues

## In this Issue

From the chair	p1
Academies and SACREs	p3
Annual General Meeting	p5
Introducing the RE Quality Mark	p6
Westhill / NASACRE award	p7
Collective Worship: A live issue	p8
Exhibitions, Museums and Resources	p9
Hajj: Journey to the heart of Islam	p10
Reviews	p12
- The Book Thief	
- TrueTube	
- 4thought.tv	
Back Page	p15

to hold true, namely that *ASCs should adopt a minimalist approach to their reviews including the possibility of deciding to make no change*.

This position would hold while Government clarifies the wider curriculum context within which any new RE syllabus might sit and the RE Council takes forward and concludes the work on developing a framework for RE provision.

The EBacc campaign of 2011 may not have achieved the hoped for result of securing a place for the subject in the baccalaureate. However, it has certainly heightened awareness of RE amongst ministers and

members of parliament, deepened understanding of the issues and galvanised supporters of RE to action. **An All Party Parliamentary Group has been set up to look at developments in relation to Government policy**



**and RE and the minister is planning to attend a meeting of the RE Council early this year.**

NASACRE has pressed for clarity on the future of



GCSE Religious Studies short courses following concern about the implications of the Wolf consultation document. This document revealed that from 2014 only those qualifications outlined in the document will be included in published performance table indicators. That list excludes qualifications with under 120 guided learning hours, such as short course GCSEs.

Although Religious Studies GCSE short courses will still be available from September 2012, their examination scores will only feature in wider data about the schools that will be published by the DfE in due course and not in the performance tables. Perhaps of greater concern to some secondary colleagues is the fact that two short courses can no longer be accredited as a full course GCSE. **If schools wish to ensure that their students' RE qualifications are reported in the published performance tables in 2014 schools should opt for the full course GCSE in RS.**

The schools landscape of many local authority areas is being transformed by the **significant numbers of Academies and Free Schools now coming on stream**. SACREs are having to respond appropriately and positively to the challenges posed by this change and to do so in the absence of any statutory structures to assist them in supporting these new additions to the local families of schools. NASACRE has work in progress to address this need.



Annual Reports from SACREs are coming in to NASACRE and many SACREs have also sent copies direct to the Secretary of State for Education. The reports are offering some initial

insights on the impact that local government spending cuts have had on the work of SACREs during 2010/11. NASACRE is planning to survey all SACREs in April 2012 to get a fuller picture on how they now stand at the end of the 2011/12 financial year.

In partnership with AREIAC we are continuing to press ministers and DfE officials on **the need to withdraw circular 1/94 on collective worship**.

Ministers reiterate that they do not wish to review the guidance at the present time. However, complete withdrawal is what we are seeking. In the absence of coherent Government advice on the issue, NASACRE is supporting development of guidance to enable SACREs and schools to promote high quality collective worship consistent with the existing legal requirements.



I am very pleased that the Westhill Trustees have enabled NASACRE to administer another round of the **Westhill Awards** and we are looking forward to announcing the successful SACREs at the NASACRE AGM.

The AGM which will take place in London on 23 May (further details on page 5) will continue our focus on what young people think about and want from RE and explore how teachers and SACREs can work together to save the subject. We shall be looking to fill four vacancies that have arisen within the NASACRE Executive and shall be holding elections for the officer posts of secretary and treasurer.



The pace of change is relentless, the list of things to do seems unending and time simply flies by. So with faded memories of the winter snow and not a little disbelief, I accept that it is already mid March and spring is well on the way.

The world of RE is certainly not boring.... and we would not have it any other way would we?

*Bruce Gill*

## Academies and SACREs

### The changing picture

Since September 2011 there has been a marked increase in the number of schools becoming academies with schools in the primary phase for the first time converting to academies in significant numbers. SACREs in some areas are facing the prospect of academies soon constituting the majority of the schools within their locality.



SACREs have understandably sought clarity on the legal requirements with regard to RE in the different categories of academies and how best to structure relationships between local Academies and the SACRE. The advice on this topic on the NASACRE website [[www.nasacre.org.uk](http://www.nasacre.org.uk)] has been regularly updated to keep pace with developments. A central feature of that information has been to point SACREs to geographical areas where good collaborative work with academies is taking place at local level.

### Legal Requirements

Academies (including Free Schools in law) are required to provide RE and collective worship and do so under the terms of their funding agreement with the Secretary of State. The type of RE specified in the funding agreement depends on whether or not the academy has a religious designation and in the case of schools that are 'converter' academies, on whether the predecessor school was a voluntary controlled faith school or foundation faith school.

There is no requirement for an academy to adopt the local Agreed Syllabus used in the LA's maintained schools. The funding agreement for a non-faith academy states that they must **arrange for RE to be given to all pupils in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses** that are set out in the relevant legislation. This means a syllabus that reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. It also means that these academies must not provide RE to pupils by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination.

Non-faith academies are free to design their own RE syllabus (within the above constraints) and are not bound by the specific locally agreed syllabus that maintained schools are required to follow. However, these academies are, with agreement, free to follow the locally agreed syllabus if they choose.

The model funding agreement for a designated faith academy specifies that it must provide RE in accordance with the tenets of their particular faith. However, it can design its own syllabus. These academies may, in addition, provide RE that is in line with the locally agreed syllabus and teach about other faiths if they choose.



## NASACRE actions

NASACRE is:

- producing publicity information to highlight the advantages to academies of teaching the local Agreed Syllabus and, more important, to encourage them to participate actively within the family of schools that the local SACRE supports. This information is targeting headteachers, chairs of governors and subject leaders of RE in academies and Free Schools.
- exploring with the Education Funding Agency (previously the Young People's Learning Agency) the practical measures that can be taken to ensure that academies and Free Schools fulfil their responsibilities with regard to providing RE.
- monitoring the numbers of academies across LA areas so that SACREs can be given timely support and advice to address developments at the local level which in some places could be happening swiftly.
- identifying good practice locally so that this can be assessed and disseminated to other SACREs looking for creative and constructive working relationships with academies which in these times of acute financial stringency also offer solutions to the vexed problem of find equitable ways to fund support for schools that no longer fall under the aegis of the LA.
- Further information about academies can be found on the NASACRE website by following the link below. <http://www.nasacre.org.uk/faqs/faqs.html>



Bruce Gill

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## SACRE annual reports



Since the demise of the QCDA, the previous recipient of SACRE annual reports, NASACRE has stepped into the breach and, to date, has received about 70 reports which are now posted on the NASACRE website. A small number of these also include links to the SACRE website where the relevant report can be found. This figure represents almost half of all SACREs.

Although the obligation to submit an annual report to the QCDA has obviously been lifted, the statutory duty to produce one has not and, by collecting them in this way, NASACRE is making them all accessible in a way they were not previously. It is therefore possible for the first time, to see this collection as a resource to benefit all.

Unfortunately NASACRE does not have the resources to interrogate annual reports in the way the QCDA did. The resulting annual survey was useful, giving valuable insights into the way other SACREs worked. The NASACRE executive is currently investigating ways in which some analysis might be achieved, but this would be rather more modest than the QCDA publication.

As well as sending its report to NASACRE, every SACRE has been encouraged to send a copy to the DfE with a letter asking what the Department intends to do with these statutory documents...it might be worth keeping up the pressure.



Julie Grove





Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May  
10 for 10.30am-3.30pm

Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London

Keynote Speakers

**BOB JACKSON**

Professor of Religious Education, University of Warwick

**RU 4 EC RE?**

*'Research and European Policy Making on Religious Education:  
Taking account of young people's views in developing the subject'*  
and

**LAT BLAYLOCK**

*'SACRE + Teachers of RE = Good Learning'*

Delegate fee: £75 per head

*Payable either by cheque, made out to NASACRE  
to accompany the delegate form(s), or by invoice after the AGM*

Please send completed forms to: Yvonne Cameron, c/o Religious Education Council,  
Voluntary Sector Centres, 76, Shoe Lane, London, EC4A 3JB; Telephone: 020 7842 8515  
Email: [admin@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:admin@nasacre.org.uk)

Closing date **WEDNESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2012**

## Introducing the Religious Education Quality Mark

### What is an RE Quality Mark?

The RE Quality Mark (REQM) is an accreditation system which recognises good practice in religious education. It is designed to be a mechanism for whole school improvement beyond religious education since its principle focus is enhanced pedagogy. The REQM will be available to all community schools and, in consultation with the National Society, there will be additional requirements for Church of England schools to enable them also to achieve the REQM. The REQM is currently supported and generously funded by St Gabriel's Trust and is managed by Jane Brooke and Mary Myatt with the backing and support of the REC.



The REQM works at the three levels of bronze, silver and gold awards.

Schools will apply for the REQM through the website and trained assessors will visit their school to validate the quality mark.

### Why Now?

Support for the subject at local authority level has been severely cut and SACREs have few mechanisms for identifying good practice. The exclusion of RE from the EBacc has caused some secondary schools to reduce RE time. Schools gaining the RE Quality Mark will be required to share their good practice and act as a central hub to develop RE for local schools.

### The Pilot

A pilot will take place in 30 schools (15 each in the North-West and East of England) by the end of the summer 2012, the paper work will be refined and a further pilot involving at least a further 30 schools will take place in 2012-13. It is planned that the REQM will be available for all schools from September 2013.

Chester Diocese, Lancashire SACRE and Cheshire East SACRE are supporting the pilot by generously giving adviser time and Suffolk SACRE have donated £1000. If any other SACRE would like to offer a contribution to this project, it would be very gratefully received to support the development of the website and the administration.

Jane **Brooke** ([scrolls2@btinternet.com](mailto:scrolls2@btinternet.com)) and Mary **Myatt** ([marymyatt@aol.com](mailto:marymyatt@aol.com))

Mary **Myatt**



## Westhill / NASACRE Award

### Staffordshire SACRE: A sense of place

Staffordshire SACRE successfully bid for a Westhill/NASACRE award. The project, *A Sense of Place*, is an exploration into the National Memorial Arboretum based at Alrewas in Staffordshire.

Created in 1997 the National Memorial Arboretum is a special place where current and future generations can wander and wonder, reflecting on the abundance of symbolism present. Covering 150 acres the Arboretum really does have something for everyone. Due to the scale of the place and the wealth of amazing memorials that exist there, it was initially a difficult task to select just a small number to focus our project on. In doing so however we believe we have made the Arboretum more accessible for teachers by providing a start point whilst exemplifying the scope that exists to take their exploration even further.



The Staffordshire bid was created in partnership with the education team at the Arboretum and is based around the production of a DVD and a resource pack for use with young people in key stages 3 and 4. Students from two high schools in Staffordshire have been filmed embarking on a journey through the Arboretum exploring aspects of PEACE, JUSTICE and RECONCILIATION. The students gain an understanding of why remembrance is such a powerful shared experience for us all sharing their thoughts and reflections throughout their learning journey.

We are part way through this project and are in the process of developing the resources to accompany the DVD but once the project is completed, it will be distributed to high schools throughout Staffordshire. It will also be used by the Arboretum education team during school visits. The DVD and resources will then be made available to everyone via the NASACRE website so watch this space!

Emma **Senior** - Senior Teacher Consultant (RE) - Staffordshire SACRE



Images on this page ©Sharon Artley

## On collective worship - a live issue!

Collective worship continues to be there, for the Government, for SACREs, for schools, for teachers, for parents and, most importantly one would hope, for pupils. Its still being there, however, is inconsequential to many in these constituent groups in the face of indifference to its importance, lack of real opportunities to influence schools, misunderstanding of the legal requirements, pressure of work, apathy and, sadly, experiences that fail to inspire. In a culture of secularisation, against the force of vociferous anti-religious rhetoric, collective worship is in danger of sliding into oblivion.

Many people wish it were not so. They are still committed to the principles of collective worship and to ensuring good practice that benefits the development of children and young people. Collective worship is still there, on the statute books... that is, if one discounts the increasing number of newly designated schools for which it ceases to be a matter of primary legislation, appearing only as a requirement of the school's funding agreement and therefore open to change on political whim.



Of course, the *bête noire* of the whole business is the infamous Circular 1/94. This advice, controversial from the start, is now eighteen years old and long since obsolete. It hangs like a millstone around the neck of collective worship and it is time it was killed off. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, that is not likely to happen. We have to find a way to work around it.



The NASACRE Executive believes the best way forward would be for SACREs and RE professionals to support each other, and our schools, to understand the nature and purpose of collective worship better and to provide worthwhile experiences that will be valued by everyone in the school community. In collaboration with the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC), a briefing paper is in the process of being written, the aim of which is to inform and inspire all those who have, or should have, an interest in collective worship. It will be freely available online to anyone who finds it of use and it is hoped it will affirm

already established best practice whilst also moving on those schools where the practice is not so good. Your pupils deserve no less!



Julie Grove



## Capital Exhibitions, Museums, Galleries and Resources



### The British Library

As a legacy of its special exhibition on sacred texts several years ago, The Library (in St. Pancras in London) developed some excellent online resources which are still available at <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/features/sacred/homepage.html>. These include videos, podcasts and various interactive features to complement the main collection. There is a particular focus on Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Library is well worth visiting at any time for its selection of religious texts.

### The British Museum

The Hajj Exhibition is at the British Museum from 26th January to 15th April 2012. See [www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org) for further details of these special displays and related events as well as information about the regular collections which feature many objects related to religion, particularly Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. (See also review of this exhibition on the next page.)



### The Jewish Museum



Based in Camden, North London, the Museum's core collection features displays relating to Judaism as a living faith and showcases an outstanding collection of Jewish ceremonial art. With an interactive Torah display at its centre, the gallery explores Jewish religious practice and traditions in the home and synagogue, using multimedia and hands-on displays to engage visitors of all ages. Highlights include a 17th-century Venetian synagogue Ark, magnificent Torah decorations, silver Hanukkah lamps and Pesach plates. The gallery not only highlights the beauty and craftsmanship of these objects, but also

relates them to religious practice within Judaism. Specially commissioned films feature British Jewish families celebrating Jewish festivals and lifecycle events.

The special exhibition galleries are not only the home of internationally acclaimed collections but also an inspirational place for you to explore Jewish culture, heritage and identity. Engaging with people of all backgrounds and faiths, the galleries bring the museum's collections to life by placing the Jewish story into the wider context of British history. See [www.jewishmuseum.org.uk](http://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk) for further information.

## The National Gallery

The National Gallery displays an array of European art featuring Christian images and themes. See [www.nationalgallery.org.uk/](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/) to access parts of the collection online and <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/learning/teachers-and-schools/> for resources for RE in schools.



## The Victoria and Albert Museum



Britain's premier museum of art and design is situated in South Kensington and features not only many religious artefacts in its various galleries and collections, but also some extremely useful web based resources. See [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk) for general information about the Museum, as well as current and forthcoming exhibitions and events, but also look at the 'subject hubs' for the different religions featured in most agreed syllabuses: see [www.vam.ac.uk/page/c/christianity/](http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/c/christianity/) [www.vam.ac.uk/page/j/judaism/](http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/j/judaism/), [www.vam.ac.uk/page/i/islam/](http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/i/islam/) <http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/h/hinduism/> <http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/b/buddhism/> and <http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/s/sikhism/> for a wealth of material designed to support knowledge and understanding of these religions. Sections include resources for teachers and video clips. In addition, other religions, such as Jainism, also have dedicated web space on this site: for example, see <http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/j/jainism/>



Lesley Prior

## Hajj: Journey to the heart of Islam

The choice of the British Museum's circular Reading Room as the space in which to host the exhibition **Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam** was inspired. Just as a pilgrim at the beginning of the Hajj makes a 7 time circumambulation of the *Ka'aba*, so the visitor is taken on a circular journey which ends at the central point of the reading room. On entering the exhibition, the visitor is assailed with sounds of pilgrims chanting the *talbiyah* (a prayer of intention recited at the beginning of the Hajj) whilst viewing large images of pilgrims dressed in *ihram* (the simple white cloth worn during the pilgrimage).

In addition to describing rituals performed the Hajj, the exhibition serves to remind the visitor of the different routes that pilgrims have taken to reach Makkah throughout its history. It also includes routes and maps and such information as





the involvement in the 19th century of Thomas Cook as the official Hajj travel agent in India.

Artefacts have been brought together from thirteen countries. There is a priceless eighth century copy of the Qur'an, Qibla pointers used to show the direction of Makkah, textiles, manuscripts, and souvenirs as well as personal objects such as travel and Hajj diaries including those of Lady Evelyn Cobbold, who in 1933 became the first British Muslim woman to make the pilgrimage and that of a 10 year old London schoolgirl in 2006 who expresses her feelings and emotions on undertaking the Hajj for the first time: "Words cannot describe the emotions that are created when one looks at the *Ka'aba*, such a simple object structurally yet so majestic and awe-inspiring it is difficult to take your eyes off it."

Some artefacts are ancient, some modern, some rich and lavish such as sections of the *kiswa*, the gold embroidered black cloth used to cover the *Ka'aba* and some such as *ihram* completely plain and unadorned. There are also audio installations, some video footage and pieces of art work. No pun intended, but I was particularly drawn to one piece entitled 'Magnetism 2012'. Inside a large glass case was a tiny black metal cube representing the *Ka'aba* surrounded in concentric circles by iron filings. Some lie prostrate, others stand vertically. The

artist Ahmed Mater al-Ziad describes it thus: "Magnetism conveys one of the essential elements of Hajj - all Muslims are considered the same in the eyes of God, whether young or old, rich or poor. Iron filings represent the unified body of pilgrims all of whom are similarly attracted to the *Ka'aba* as the centre of the world".



Another display board features a photograph of the boxer Muhammad Ali: "I felt exalted by the indescribable spiritual atmosphere there as over 1.5 million pilgrims invoked God to forgive them for their sins and bestow on them his choices blessings".

For a non-Muslim, this exhibition provides a rare opportunity to see such a collection. When I visited, there was a hushed, almost spiritual atmosphere in the exhibition space. People talked, but in quiet tones. I felt privileged to be able to see the reactions of Muslim visitors, some of whom were *hajjis* and some perhaps yet to visit, discussing the artefacts or recounting personal experiences.

If I were to make one criticism, it is that there is an enormous amount of reading to do and if you were planning a visit with pupils, pre-visit preparation would be essential to enable them to make the most of the experience.

By the end of the circumambulation, non-Muslims visitors will be able to appreciate more fully the spiritual significance of this journey and have gained a greater understanding of the exhibition's sub-title.

**Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam** is at the Reading Room of the British Museum until 15th April.

Sharon Artley





## REVIEWS



**The Book Thief**, by Markus Zusak

published by Black Swan 2007

© 2005 Markus Zusak

ISBN 0552773891

Have you read *The Book Thief*? If you have, you may want to stop reading this now so that your own experience of the book remains undisturbed, pure and immediate. If you have not, you may want to stop reading this now and go and buy, beg or borrow it so that your experience of it will be untarnished and unmediated, your own to be expectantly treasured.

I have read *The Book Thief* and it moved me like, well, to be honest, like no other book I have ever read. And so if you do continue to read this, please be aware that this is my experience of the book and that it may well differ significantly from anyone else's – but that I strongly recommend that everyone else allows it into their lives. Many books come alive in the minds of their readers, but it is strange to read one that dances so vigorously in the imagination and yet is narrated by Death! ("A small piece of Truth. I do not carry a sickle or scythe. I only wear a hooded black robe when it is cold....you want to know what I look like? I'll help you out. Find yourself a mirror while I continue.") And what a mirror! *The Book Thief* is a rare accomplishment in that whilst its narrative is the unfolding horrors of living under the Nazi regime, it uplifts you in its focus on the victories of the little, simple things in life that carry us through the horrific personal and global tragedies.

The 'book thief' herself is a young girl, Liesel, who encounters Death at an early age and in the tragic loss of her younger brother on a train as her mother tries to save her children from the authorities. It is here that Death first notices the book thief and the remainder of the story is the episodic unfolding of Liesel's struggles, glories, relationships and love of books through an age when all these are shaped or destroyed by an imposing ideology. All this is conveyed through the eyes of the innocent and vibrant girl and the work of the ageless, worn and yet curious Spectre. It is a deeply spiritual and human book. Death, in introducing the story, makes this quite explicit:

*"Yes, often I am reminded of her....I have kept her story to retell. It is one of the small legion I carry, each one extraordinary in its own right. Each one an attempt...to prove to me that you, and your human existence, are worth it"*

The author uses the sound, the shape, the texture, the conscience of words to convey a panoramic array of humanity at its worst and best, but always, at its heart, the hope that struggles within every event to move us forward. Language is used not just to describe, but to jolt us out of our comforting perceptions and to draw for us the jagged juxtaposition of human living. Phrases such as:

*"The breakfast coloured sun." and "Somewhere inside her were the souls of words."*

stand out sharply to make us pause, think and question. The books that Liesel found still intact from the burning - "perhaps they were damp. Perhaps the fire didn't burn long enough....Whatever the reason, they were huddled amongst the ashes, shaken. Survivors." – take unto themselves human guilt and hope.



The power of words, written and spoken, is a major theme of the book. When Liesel shouts angry insults at the one woman who had allowed her to devour more books, the damage and pain are palpable "Cuts had opened up and a series of wounds were rising to the surface of her skin. All from the words. From Liesel's words". And the absolute extreme of this, that, "Hitler would be nothing without words". Words count. What we say and write matters. Words shape our world for good or ill, and we should never forget this. We should never slip and be careless – or duped.

*The Book Thief* is not everybody's cup of tea and is often mistaken for a 'Holocaust novel', or historical fiction. It is neither. If anything, it is a fantasy (not the genre). It is imaginative fiction using language, ideas and history creatively to explore our humanity. Ultimately I see it as a positive and optimistic book, and its 'last note' is filled with the wonder that can be humanity. But it recognises that this wonder, this potential, this spirit has deep and sinister as well as soaring and glorious dimensions to it.

And it is the little interactions that matter as much as, or more than, the global conglomerate of the historical 'greats'. How different it would be if we all stood up for basic human goodness and kindness in our words and therefore in our deeds.

This book reduced me to genuine, unsolicited and unexpected sobbing. That is not why I loved it; it is because I loved it. I hope I have not put you off.....

Bill Moore



### TrueTube - What is Sacred <http://www.truetube.co.uk/>

For those of you who have not heard of TrueTube, it is a free, award winning education site for schools with downloadable videos, lesson and assembly plans for RE as well as PSHE and Citizenship for Key Stages 3 & 4.



Launched in 2007, TrueTube contains hundreds of high quality short films on a whole range of religious, social, moral and ethical issues, made both by TrueTube professionals and by young people. Many of the films are accompanied by lesson plans to support their use in the classroom. Since its launch, TrueTube and its partner companies have won a number of prestigious awards and are currently amongst the finalists for the Education Resource Awards (ERA) for 2012 in the 'Best Secondary Resource or Equipment - involving ICT' category.

*The Sacred in the Modern World* is an on-going project led by Professor Gordon Lynch at the University of Kent. It involves original new theoretical and case study research, as well as a range of wider activities that take this research out to a wider public beyond the university. One strand of this research has been to work with TrueTube to develop a series of resources entitled *What is Sacred?* Lynch observes that even in our secular society there are "moments in social life that are highly morally charged" and that "the moments of greatest moral certainty are also the moments of greatest moral blindness". The films are intriguing and explore how the sacred can be both profound and problematic.

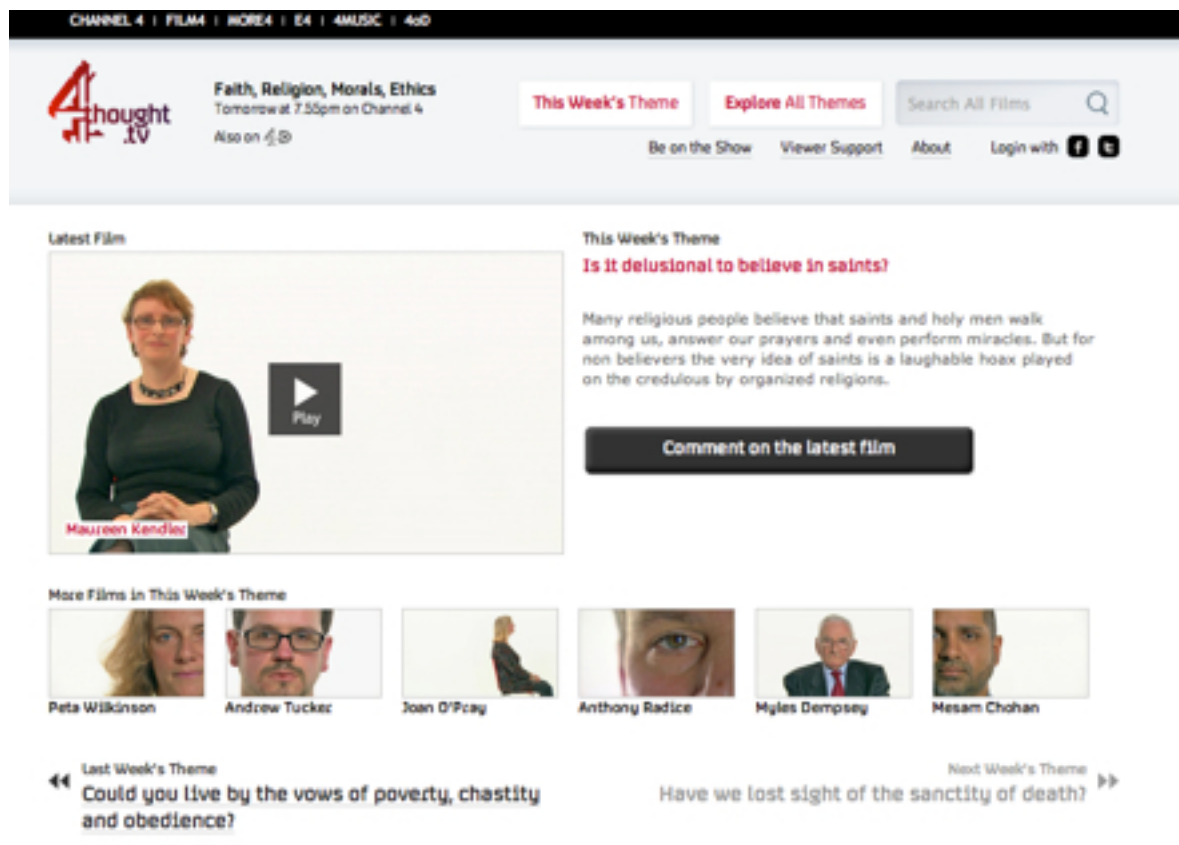
There are four films in the series: *What is Sacred?*, *One Hour to Save the Nation*, *The Cult of the Child* and *Is Nature Sacred?* The first two films also have downloadable support materials. Each is accessible for a teenage audience, juxtaposing humour with the voices of ordinary people, each focusing on a particular area of the RE or citizenship curriculum.

Sharon Artley



## 4thought.tv

4thought.tv is Channel 4's daily moral and ethics opinion show. It is broadcast on every single day of the year, after the news.



Every week it explores a theme, such as whether it's [wrong to want to be rich](#), if [faith schools should be banned](#) or whether [God chooses sides in war](#). It showcases several different views or perspectives, in order to stimulate a discussion. Viewers hear from the devoutly religious such as [Ann Peoples](#), leaders like [Rabbi Jonathan Romain](#) to atheists such as [Stephen K Amos](#), converts like [Mohammed Payne](#), as well as the holders of more extremist views like [Stephen Green](#), representatives of non-traditional lifestyles for example, [Clair Lewis](#) as well as [politicians](#) and other [celebrities](#). The programme makers are always looking for new contributors, so if any SACRE members would like to take part, please get in touch and tell them a little about yourself. See <http://www.4thought.tv/> for details.

After watching the films, you can also share your own thoughts. Please do let the rest of the UK know what you think about animal rights, charity or celibacy in the church. This website has very engaged users who enjoy debating, and whether you are religious, spiritual, sceptical, uncertain or a non-believer, your thoughts will be very much valued.

Lesley **Prior**



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## BACKPAGE ... SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### April

1st	Christian	Holy Week begins
4th	Chinese	Ch'ing Ming
5th	Christian	Maundy Thursday
5th	Jain	Mahavira Jayanti
6th	Christian	Good Friday
6th	Hindu	Hanuman Jayanti
7th	Jewish	Passover
8th	Buddhist	Hanamatsuri
8th	Christian	Easter Day
8th	Japanese	Hanamatsuri
14th	Sikh	Vaisakh
15th	Christian	Pascha [Orthodox Easter]
19th	Jewish	Yom Hashoah
21st	Bahá'í	Ridvan

23rd Christian St.George's Day

23rd Zoroastrian Adar Mah Parab

26th Jewish Yom Ha'atzma'ut

### May

1st Pagan Beltaine

8th Buddhist Hanamatsuri

10th Jewish Lag B'Omer

13th Christian Christian Aid Week begins

17th Christian Ascension day

23rd Bahá'í Declaration of the aBb

25th Zoroastrian Zartusht-No-Diso

27th Christian Pentecost / Whit Sunday

27th Jewish Shavuot begins

29th Bahá'í The Ascension of the Baha'i'llah

## ON THE WEBSITE ...

Do keep an eye on the website where you will find:

- 🕒 News updates
- 🕒 Information about NASACRE
- 🕒 News about events
- 🕒 News on projects
- 🕒 The Newsletter Archive
- 🕒 The FAQ archive
- 🕒 Agenda items for your next SACRE meetings
- 🕒 A membership list
- 🕒 Exemplar documentation



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Please also check your details and if necessary update the membership section and add to the exemplar documentation. Contact us at [web@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:web@nasacre.org.uk)

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