



Religious Education Accreditation Program

Life in First Century Palestine



**Brisbane
Catholic
Education**

teaching • challenging • transforming

We are a faith-filled learning community creating a better future

Your task:

Working in small groups, your group needs to become a group living in first century Palestine. You need to:

1. Read the information provided to find out about your group.
2. Talk with your group members. What did you discover about what life is like for you? What do you do? What do you believe? What's really important to you? What really irritates you?
3. Find a NT text that mentions your group. What new meaning can you bring to this text from what you've learnt?
4. Present back to the whole group and provide the following information:
 - Who are you?
 - What do you want everyone to understand about you?
 - What's important to your group?
 - What do you think about Jesus?
 - Ask people to look up one text where your group is mentioned and highlight how understanding your group brings new meaning to the text.

Groups:

1. Scribes
2. Pharisees
3. Essenes
4. Zealots
5. The Temple people (the Priests, High Priest, Chief Priests, Levites)
6. The Sadducees
7. The Herodians
8. The Samaritans

You can find information about your group from one of the links below:

http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Jewish_Groups.htm (Groups 1-7 below)

http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Ethnic_Groups.htm (Samaritans)

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Presentation time!

Introduce your group, what's important to you and what you think of Jesus.

Show us texts in the Bible (or about the Bible, Essenes) that talk about your group and tell us what they reveal.

You are the groups of first century Palestine – put forward your case clearly and show people who you are! (Maybe some people will want to join your group by the end of today!)

So, what do mean Jesus was a Jew?

Which group do you think Jesus most likely belonged to (or none of them!?)

And the surprising answer is...

Some scholars think that Jesus could have been a Pharisee.

Why? Because Jesus came to reform Judaism, not to start Catholicism. In fact, Jesus knew nothing about Catholicism in his lifetime. Sometimes the people you argue most with are your own people, because they are the ones you're trying to change.

It's unclear whether Jesus actually belonged to any of these groups, but there are scholars giving serious consideration to Jesus being a Pharisee.

What happened after Jesus died?

The war with the Romans did eventuate, and Jerusalem and the Temple burned for days. This was catastrophic for the Jewish people. How could they continue to be Jewish if they no longer had a Temple?

The place of Temple worship ceased and Rabbinic Judaism developed.

To understand the size of the Temple choose one of the following videos (for 7 or 12 minutes on this site:

<https://religiouseducation0.wixsite.com/thegospels/the-destruction-of-the-temple>

**Thank you for bringing 1st century
Palestine to life!**

For more information
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