



On your marks

Finding ways to connect with the worldwide family of the Christian Faith has been a growing area of interest both in churches and schools. Such windows into the multi-cultural and international practice of Christianity in today's world are a vital resource to give us a true picture of what it means to be a global Christian in the 21st century. For Christians this is of course also important evidence of the continuing truth and power of the story of Jesus to influence lives and transform societies.

In [A-cross the World](#), published by BRF in 2011, this connection to the big picture was through the symbol of the cross. Differing Christian traditions and various Christian faith communities around the world are united by this one key and central sign of a shared faith. This universal cross has at the same time been interpreted, designed and adapted to express a unique, local expression of that same faith. With each cross comes a particular story of how each community experiences God's love and puts it into action.

Get set

Each of the crosses in this new series supplements the 40 crosses that can already be found in the book [A-cross the World](#). With each there is a Bible link with wondering questions, background information about the cross, stories to share and craft ideas to make a version of the cross - providing enough material for a session with children in a church group, in the classroom or at a mixed-age event. There is also a picture provided for each cross that could be printed or used in a PowerPoint presentation in order to provide a talking point for groups or as a focus for collective worship.

This cross belongs to a series of new crosses and, as with the first collection, the overall aim remains the same, namely:

- to enable children and adults to see the cross through the eyes of other cultures and traditions
- to prompt discussion and debate on why this single, historical event continues to exercise such an influence worldwide
- to explore how Christians in a wide variety of places, different times in history and in different circumstances, have lived purposeful lives because of their faith in a Christ, who died and who is risen - symbolised by the cross

For further cross ideas linked to the church's year, go to:

- [Easter - A resurrection cross;](#)
- [Lent - an ongoing idea for exploring the cross through Lent;](#)



Go!

To view associated pictures for this cross, go to: [A Canterbury Cross 1 - picture](#)

Bible link

The good news is spreading all over the world with great success. It has spread in that same way among you, ever since the first day you learnt the truth about God's wonderful kindness from our good friend Epaphras. He works together with us for Christ and is a faithful worker for you. He is also the one who told us about the love that God's Spirit has given you.

Colossians 1:6-8 (CEV)

Paul had never been to Colossae, which is in modern-day Turkey, but he had heard that the story of Jesus had been preached and welcomed by them through the missionary work of others. Here he reminds them that they are now part of a worldwide movement of Christian believers linked by a network of faithful people like Epaphras.

Wondering about the Bible story

I wonder what it had been like for Epaphras, having heard about Jesus from Paul, to go back to his own home town and preach to his friends and family?

I wonder whether it encouraged the young church in Colossae to hear from Paul that they were part of a much bigger global family of believers?

I wonder why Paul decided to write to them even though they had never met him? Have you ever received encouragement from someone you have never seen?

The story of this cross

In 1867, a small brooch was excavated from beneath St George's Street, a tiny road that extends from the High Street in the centre of Canterbury. This brooch has a Saxon design, dates to around 850AD and was originally cast in bronze. It has a triangular panel of silver in each of the four arms, and each panel ends with a three-cornered knot pattern that symbolises the Trinity. It is inlaid with a black metallic alloy and edged with a vine-leaf pattern.

To see this cross, go to [A Canterbury Cross 2 - picture](#)

The design of the Canterbury Cross shows it to be a consecration cross, associated with the opening of a new church. It is also known as Becket's Cross, after Thomas a Becket, one of the more famous Archbishops of Canterbury.

In Canterbury Cathedral, a replica of this cross has been carved in stone and mounted on the wall at the west end of the south aisle. Similar replicas have been mounted on pieces of stone from

Canterbury Cathedral and sent around the world to twelve other Anglican Cathedrals, giving a visible reminder of the link with the 'Mother Church' in Canterbury. The Anglican Communion is the worldwide family of Anglican churches that numbers about 80 million Christians in 160 countries. Many of these churches were founded as the result of missionary work from the United Kingdom as part of the expansion of the British Empire in the 19th Century in particular.

The Canterbury Cross is also the design used for a special award. As the Cross of the Order of St Augustine of Canterbury it is presented occasionally by the Archbishop of Canterbury to a small number of clergy and lay people who have given long and exceptionally distinguished service to the Church of England or the Anglican Communion or, occasionally, other Christian denominations. The Cross of St Augustine was founded by Archbishop Michael Ramsey and was first awarded in February 1965. There are gold, silver and bronze crosses but in recent years the Archbishop has generally awarded silver crosses.

[Here is a photograph of this cross.](#)

In 2004 this cross was awarded to Jenny Ottewell, who, as a mission partner from CMS (Church Mission Society), had worked in the education department of the Church of Uganda for almost 30 years.

Crafting the cross

Creating a version of this cross gives an opportunity for some more intricate craft work. You will need some shiny bronze-coloured card.

Cut out a circle in the diameter of the cross you want to make and then, using a small heart template, mark out four areas by resting the top of the heart up against the edge of the circle in each of its four quadrants. Cut out these areas and you should have the basic outline of the Canterbury cross once you have tidied up the open areas between the four arms.

Next, the central area needs to be overlaid with a small square of the card (see the picture of this cross) and then the finishing touches of intricate design can be added by hand.

You may like to mount the cross on a coloured background* for display and/or add some imitation jewels to give the cross added sparkle!

(*Or, as the cross is awarded to Christians for their work around the Anglican Communion, why not mount the cross on the background of a circular world map.)

Cross reflection

*O Lord, let me rest the ladder of gratitude against your cross,
and mounting, kiss your feet.*

The prayer of an Indian Christian from a CMS prayer paper