

Unit 6: Forms of Expression



Lesson title: What is Christian art?

Starter Activity

What do you think this image means?



Lesson Objectives

- ❑ To become familiar with different types of religious art.
- ❑ To understand the importance of religious art.
- ❑ To be able to demonstrate the way in which religious art can convey meaning.

Main Activity 1: Examples of famous Christian Art.



You will now see some famous art on the screen. Each images has a set of questions placed next to it. Look at the image, note down the title and artist and then answer the questions.



The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci – Mural / *La Ultima Cena* de Leonardo da Vinci

What is happening in this image?

How would you describe Jesus' expression in this image?

Stretch: What is the significance of this moment?





The Return of the Prodigal Son – Rembrandt

In the *Parable of the Prodigal Son*, a father has two sons; the younger of whom asks for his inheritance, wastes his fortune and returns home after becoming destitute. He intends to beg his father to make him one of his servants but the father, instead, *celebrates his return*. When his elder son objects, the father tells him that they are celebrating because his brother, who had been lost, has now come to his senses. Rembrandt's painting *depicts the moment when the son returns home in a wretched state*. The father can be seen receiving his son with a tender gesture while the brother crosses his hands in judgment.

Explain in at least 30 words the story behind this painting.

Extension: How would you describe this painting in 6 words?



Baptism of Jesus – Daniel Bonnell

What do you notice about the colours used in this painting?

What symbol is being used in this painting?

What do you think the artist was trying to show in this image?

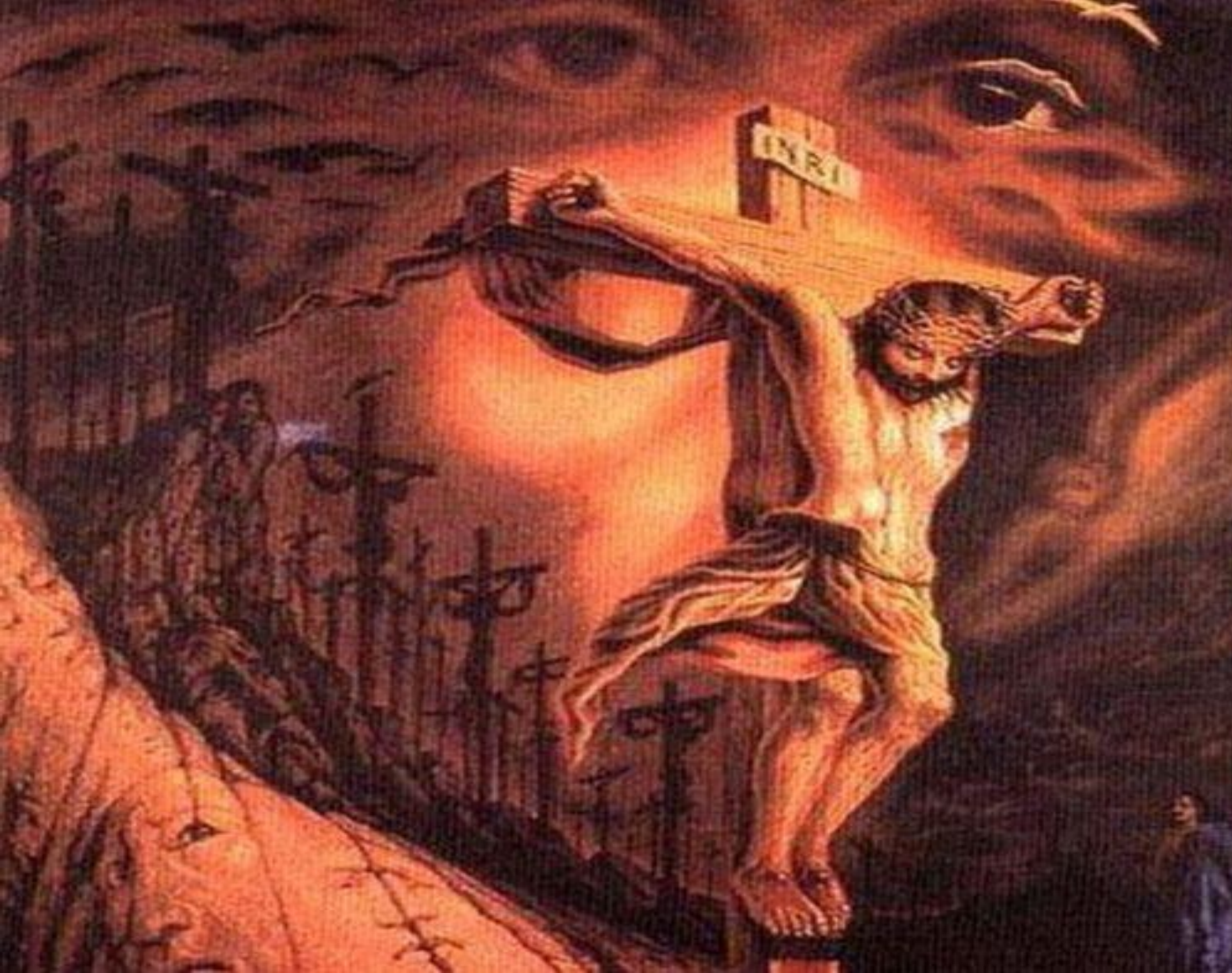
African Madonna – Unknown Artist

This beautiful depiction of an African Madonna with vibrant colours and a stylized manner is reminiscent of an icon in its formality, but still conveys the tender protectiveness of a mother for her child.

What is interesting about this painting of Mary?

Often religious paintings of Jesus and Mary reflect the artist's origin and culture. Why do you think some artists believe this is important?





Crucifixion of Jesus – Unknown

**What is unusual
about this image?**

**What might be more
appealing about this
type of religious
painting?**

**What do you think
this image is trying to
show?**

Main Activity 2: Why is art important to Christians?

Christians believe humans were made by God in His image and likeness. In Genesis 1 it states, "In the day that **God** created man, in the **likeness of God made** He him. Male and female created He them."

Humans are unique and God gave humans the ability to express themselves through artistic means. Humans from the beginning of time have used their creativity to express their beliefs and faith.

Art can help people understand more about their faith as art can often explain what words can not.

The benefits of art are:

- They express deep feelings
- Everyone can take their own meaning and ideas from art.
- Art can help educate people on the teachings of Jesus.
- Art allows people to express themselves in whichever way they choose.

Task: Using the information above create an explanation of why it is important that Christians use art to express belief. Write your ideas in at least thirty words.