



# St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School -Sycamore Class

## Mayans

Gospel Value  
Faith

What I should know already- Who were the Ancient Egyptians? Why was Ancient Egypt the 'Gift of the Nile'? Who were the Ancient Egyptian pharaohs? Why did the Ancient Egyptians build the pyramids? What was mummification in Ancient Egypt? Who were the Ancient Egyptian Gods? What was discovered inside Tutankhamun's tomb?



### Key Vocabulary

**Dynasty-** a line of hereditary rulers of a country.

**Civilisation-** the stage of human social and cultural development and organization that is considered most advanced.

**Maize-** a cereal plant that yields large grains (corn or sweetcorn) set in rows on a cob.

**Codex-** an ancient manuscript text in book form.

**Hieroglyphics-** enigmatic or incomprehensible symbols or writing.

**Stela-** an upright stone slab or column typically bearing a commemorative inscription or relief design, often serving as a gravestone.

**Scribe-** a person who copies out documents, especially one employed to do this before printing was invented.

**Bloodletting-** the withdrawal of blood from a patient to prevent or cure illness and disease.

**Cacao-** a dried, fermented, fatty seed of the fruit of a South American evergreen tree that is used in making cocoa.

**Kenote-** a natural pit, or sinkhole, resulting from the collapse of limestone bedrock that exposes groundwater.

### Timeline

**2000 BC - 1000 BC** People begin to farm and settle in small villages. People copy the crafts of the Olmec people, including making pottery and carving with jade. Basic trade is developed.

**900 BC** Farmers begin to use irrigation systems to help their plants to grow. This means larger settlements can form.

**300 BC** The first cities begin to develop and the Mayan population grows rapidly.

**292 BC** The first known Mayan writing is produced.

**50 BC** The first temple is built in Cerros.

**250 AD** The Maya begin their most powerful era. Astronomy, mathematics and architecture are all developing.

**300 AD** The Maya adopt the idea of a monarchy and are now ruled by kings.

**500 AD - 800 AD** Major cities develop and thrive, such as Tikal, Palenque, Uxmal and Copan. Fine temples and palaces are built and art, culture and religion all reach their peak.

**800 - 900 AD** The major cities begin to decline and are eventually abandoned

### Key Knowledge

- Mesoamerica was the region in which the Mayan Civilisation existed.
- The Spanish Conquistadors discovered the Mayan ruins in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.
- The Mayan city states went to war: to secure trade routes, to take slaves and sacrifices, for power and wealth.
- Each city state was ruled by its own king supported by nobles and priests.
- Maize was the most important food source and was sacred to the Maya.
- Mayans honoured their gods by making offerings and sacrifices.
- The Maya believed that the universe would be destroyed and created again at the end of each cycle of their 'long count' calendar.