



RESOURCES DRAWN
FROM YOUTH MINISTRY

Highly Seasoned

26 sketches to spice up the Church Year



Highly Seasoned

26 Sketches to spice up the Church's Year

ST MARYS CF10

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Introduction

This collection of dramas has been drawn from Youth Ministry within a Diocesan, Deanery and Parish environment. Like any resource which can easily become dated or not be transferred easily from one situation to another, feel free to adapt, edit, rewrite them according to your circumstances, particularly in terms of cultural references!

These dramas can be used within a youth group setting to provoke discussion – and indeed, some of these were written simply to do that – to introduce a theme which was further explored either in group activity or to form the basis for the theme of a public act of worship or a homily or address. They can be performed as part of public worship for which many of these dramas were originally written, both Eucharistic and no-Eucharistic. None of them were written by experts in drama (you may be able to tell!) and neither were they performed by actors – just young people, clergy, youth leaders and other who were willing to put themselves out there, and make a fool of themselves!

I Don't Know What the World is Coming to!

This drama is suitable for use during Advent and takes the prophesy of Isaiah: 'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.' Two men are sat reading newspapers in the pub, having a good old moan about the world!

Cast: Alf, Bob

Alf I don't know what the world is coming to. Wars, violence, people killing each other. *(Deep intake of breath)* I don't know what the world is coming to.

Bob Did you see that story last week about the old woman who was mugged in her own home. 93 she was!

Alf Yeh, that was awful. It's terrible isn't it? Not even safe in your own home. I don't know what the world is coming to.

Bob I wouldn't be surprised if it all comes to an end soon. Best thing I say.

Alf And what about that family in number 74?! In and out of prison. Drugs and everything! The children are walking the streets at all hours of the day and night. Taken into care twice! I don't know what the world is coming to.

Bob Someone wants to sort all this out. We want someone in power to straighten a few things up! They don't even make decent politicians these days.

Alf Put me in number 10! I'd sort a few things out. I'd straighten things up a bit! I don't know what the world is coming to!

Bob Yeh, and worst of all - it looks like rain! Typical. As if the world isn't bad enough. It's always raining. Rain, rain, rain, rain, rain!

Alf Yeh looks a bit dark too. I think we're in for a bit of a storm. I don't know what the world is coming to!

Bob I can't wait for the summer

Alf Why? There'll only be more rain.

Bob I hate these dark nights

Alf Yeh, I know what you mean

Bob You know what we need? A bit of light.

Alf Yeh a nice bit of light to cheer us up

Bob Have they forecast any light?

Alf I doubt it! They can't get anything right. I don't know what the world is coming to.

Bob What does Isaiah say?

Alf You don't believe in that superstitious nonsense do you?

Bob Hey, Isaiah's good. He's gets a few things right. Not like some of those false prophets, not like that Mystic Maggy!

Alf What sign are you?

Bob Just get on with it!

Alf *(Looks through the newspaper)* Hang on then . . . where are we? Ah, there it is. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light . . ." *(He looks confused)*

Bob What does he mean by that?

Alf Absolutely, no idea.

Bob Read on.

Alf *(He continues to read).* "On those who lived in a land as dark as death a light has dawned." It's a load of rubbish – I told you! It'll never happen! I can't believe that people believe this rubbish!

Bob Anyway, what are you up to today?

Alf Not a lot really. Might go to the Temple for a bit of a pray.

Bob Not very exciting in the temple though, is it?

Alf No...bit boring really.

Bob I don't like that High Priest. Things have gone downhill since he's been there. You gonna have another pint?

Alf Nah – I didn't like the first one. They can't even pull a decent pint here. I don't know what the world is coming to.

Bob Anyway, time to move on. See you tomorrow?

Alf Aye I expect so.

Bob Have a good day.

Alf I doubt it. I don't know what the world is coming to!

Revolutionary Thoughts

Another Advent Drama that features those words of Jesus to stay awake! (Luke 12: 35 ff)

Cast: Jamie, Dad

Jamie I think Jesus was a bit of a revolutionary

Dad What do you mean?

Jamie Well, here I am, a teenager, wanting to rebel by simply staying out half an hour later than my parents say I have to be in, afraid to get my tongue pierced in case mother has a fit, and even taking off the clip-on lip-ring before I get up the drive and I've just found a passage in Scripture that tells me I can stay up late!

Dad What?

Jamie I've just found a passage that could end all those years of teenage angst before they even really start.

Dad I have no idea what you're talking about.

Jamie What I'm saying is that I could end all the arguments now. I could stop you worrying about where I am and who I'm with, or whether or not you'll let me stay up and watch So Graham Norton. In fact you could go out yourself, enjoy yourself, stop worrying, there's no need to come home at all.

Dad Are you feeling alright?

Jamie Yes, it's all here.

Dad Where?

Jamie Here. In Scripture. On the very lips of Jesus. *"Happy are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes...if it is in the middle of the night or before dawn when he comes and he still finds them awake, then they are happy indeed!"* This is amazing I can stay up round the clock. I need never go to bed again!

Dad Have you flipped?

Jamie And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!

Dad Excuse me?!

Jamie I was quoting. Jesus. Jesus says I can stay up late tonight. This is fab! I'm gonna get some popcorn in for the late nighter!

Dad Um come back here a moment. I think you've crossed a few wires.

Jamie No I don't think so. It's here in black and white.

Dad I think you've misunderstood it a bit. Jesus was just illustrating a point. That we must be ready for him at any time. He wants us to be prepared. Be alert. On guard. Awakened by his coming.

Jamie What? You've got an answer for everything! Just when I thought my problems have ended. You're such a Killjoy.

Dad Not at all! It's an exciting time. Being ready makes us expectant. Eager. Alert. Active! Jesus isn't a killjoy – he creates joy!

Jamie One more point. I know I've got school tomorrow but can I stay up and watch Night of the Living Dead Part 2?

Dad No!

Jamie Just thought I'd ask.

On the Road

A sketch for Advent that features the figure of John the Baptist and his preaching to clear a straight path for the Lord (Luke 3:4ff).

Cast: Bob, Stan (Two 'Road-workers' taking a lunch break.)

Bob What's in yours?
Stan Marmite.
Bob I've got cheese and pickle
Stan Fancy a top up?
Bob Why not! The boss isn't around!
Stan Earl Grey or Darjeeling?
Bob Haven't you got any English Breakfast?
Stan No, I'm clean out of English Breakfast.
Bob I was in the boss's office the other day. Walked in on him having his lunch. Honey and locust sandwiches he was eating!
Stan Eughh! That's disgusting. I hate honey!
Bob Look out, here he comes. Look busy!
Stan Who does he think he is anyway?
Bob Some people think he's a prophet!
Stan Other's think he's the Messiah himself!
Bob I think he's mad!
Stan Well he will be mad if we don't get the job finished on time. I can't understand why he wants this road straightened out. I think it's nice like it is.
Bob Apparently he's expecting someone special and he wants everything straight and tidy by the time he comes so that this 'someone special' can have a smooth pathway.
Stan He was lecturing one of the lads the other day that he wants a nice smooth surface – wants all the bumps smoothed out. Says he wants nothing to get in the way.
Stan Guess it must be someone important, then!

Bob That's what he said! He reckons he's not worthy to even tie his shoelaces for him.

Stan He's definitely not right, you know!

Bob I don't think he's very popular, either. I hear he's been upsetting the authorities again.

Stan That's the last thing he wants to do - especially if he wants to get planning permission! You know what the council's like!

Bob I don't think he's the kind of person to bow to the authorities. He's got his own agenda.

Stan Anyway, better get back to work. If we upset him he'll only get us to wear camel skin like him and no way am I getting kitted out in that gear!

Getting a Few Things Straight

Another Drama featuring the figure of John the Baptist. This particular drama is short and sharp and could easily be 'filled out'. It can be performed as a voice over to make it sound like a radio programme, which also means that you don't have to learn lines! (Luke 3)

Cast: Interviewer, Russell Budgie

- Interviewer** Russell, welcome to Movie Magic!
- Russell** Thank you. It's good to be with you
- Interviewer** You've been busy filming a new movie centred around a rather interesting character. What drew you to the part of John the Baptist?
- Russell** Well, John was such a colourful character, and so full of life.
- Interviewer** Did you enjoy making the film?
- Russell** Yes, the rest of the cast were brilliant and we had a fair few laughs too!
- Interviewer** But the film has a serious message too, doesn't it?
- Russell** Yeh, that's right. John came with a mission. He was preparing the way for Jesus. He told people that they should repent of their sins, and make a new start! And that's serious business.
- Interviewer** What was the most difficult part for you in making the film?
- Russell** Erm...I think probably eating the locusts - that was disgusting. But also the scenes when Jesus was being baptised. We re-shot that scene about ten times - by the end of it I was really cold and wet!
- Interviewer** Does it make a difference for you playing the part of a real life character?
- Russell** Oh yes, because you need to get things as right as possible.
- Interviewer** Although you played the lead role in the film, it's funny that John actually says that there was someone greater than him.
- Russell** That's right - he was referring to Jesus.
- Interviewer** So, will there be a sequel?
- Russell** Maybe - but of course I won't be in it! John the Baptist has to give way to another hero - Jesus!

Mary's Song

Another short interview—this time with the Mother of Jesus and exploring the Magnificat, words that have become a favourite song of the Church. Again, this drama could be performed with voices only to make it sound like a radio programme (Luke 1:46—56)

Cast: Interviewer, Mary

Intro Our reporter caught up with Mary to find out about her favourite song!

Interviewer Mary, thanks for joining us. On this programme we've been thinking about favourite tunes. You must have a favourite song!

Mary Well, my favourite song is actually one I sang myself!

Interviewer Oh yeh? Tell us about it!

Mary Well, it was just after I had received some good news that I had been specially chosen to be the mother of Jesus. I ran off to see my cousin Elizabeth. She was soooo excited! I don't know what came over me! But I just came out with this song that had been going round in my head.

Interviewer What was it about?

Mary Well, basically, it was about how wonderful I was feeling that God had done such great things for me. And I knew, I just *knew*, that every generation down the ages would thank me.

Interviewer You obviously felt that God was doing some good things for you

Mary Of course! He does wonderful things for everyone. He does amazing things, he looks after the helpless, those who others think are unimportant, the poor, the hungry, those who are weak or powerless.

Interviewer I suppose a lot of people were beginning to think that God had forgotten about them.

Mary Yes, but don't you see? God made a promise and he kept his promise. He's come to help us.

Interviewer Mary - thanks for speaking to us today. I'm sure that many people, for years to come, will sing that song and think of you and all that God has done for you and the world!

Gimmicks!

A Drama for the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. It is to be used at the beginning of the Liturgy and incorporates the traditional words of introduction for that Feast. No character names have been added as they can be played by themselves and Character A may be an appropriate part for the Priest (Luke 2:21-40)

Cast: A, B

- A *(In an overdramatic 'film' voice-over voice!)* In a land long, long ago there was a man named Simeon who . . .
- B *(interrupting)* What are you doing?
- A Sorry?
- B What are you doing?
- A I'm trying to make it interesting, like you said.
- B Yeh, Interesting not . . . ridiculous.
- B I'm trying to set the scene, create an atmosphere
- B Well can you do it without that stupid voice?
- A I thought it was a good voice
- B Well it's not. . . it's stupid. Do it properly.
- A In a land, long, long ago there was a man named Simeon *(Pause and then quickly in with...)* who had super human powers and . . .
- B Hang on, hang on. He didn't have super human powers. Where did you get the super human powers from? You've been watching Xena the Warrior Princess, haven't you? Haven't you?!
- A I'm just spicing it up with a bit of artistic license.
- B You don't need to.
- A But the story's a bit boring otherwise.
- B Boring?
- A Yeh...an old man goes to the temple and sees a child. Who's interested in hearing about old men? *(Pause)* Apart from old women.

B That's exactly it. This isn't about gimmicks. This isn't about image. It's about a small child, an old man called Simeon, an old woman called Anna . . .

A Aha!

B What?

A Anna – I knew there'd be an old woman in it somewhere.

B Well she appears on the scene just after Simeon

A Oh, that's so sad.

B Sad?

A Yeh they miss each other. It's like that film 'Sleepless in Seattle' with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan. She goes to the top of the Empire State Building and they . . .

B That's it!

A What?

B I'll be the narrator, you be Simeon.

A Ok. No need to get shirty.

B In a land, long, long ago there was an old man called Simeon

A I'm 83 you know!

B That's not in the script!

A I know but I'm being an old man.

B Well do you have to say that?

A Old men always say that

B Well don't say it!

A Well what do you want me to do? Take my teeth out?

B I'll knock your teeth out in a minute! Can we just get on with the Eucharist. People are waiting. In a land long, long ago there was an old man called Simeon. He was an upright and devout man...(to A) just keep 'acting'. . . It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he wouldn't see death...

A That's ridiculous!

B What now?

A He would never see death? That's ridiculous. Unless, of course - he was the Highlander – Connor Macleod of the Clan Macleod. *(In a Scottish accent)* I am immortal.

A He is not the Highlander...are you really intent on trying to spice up this story?

B You said it! You said he would not taste death

A I hadn't finished the sentence...I was taking a breather.

B It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death
UNTIL he has set eyes on the Christ of the Lord.

A Ah I see...so all he had to do was avoid the Christ and he would never
die...that's an amazing story.

B It's not like that at all! Simeon was dying to see Jesus. That was the one thing
that he wanted to do before he died. Can we continue?

A Be my guest.

B Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought
in Jesus to present him to the Lord just as the Law required, Simeon took Jesus
in his arms and blessed God. And that's what this Eucharist is all about. Forty
days ago, we celebrated Jesus birthday

A Was it really as long ago as that?!

B Today we recall the day when he was presented in the temple, fulfilling the
law of Moses and at the same time going to meet his faithful people. Simeon
and Anna were led by the Holy Spirit, came to the temple, recognised Christ as
their Lord, and proclaimed him with joy.

A So what do you want me to do with this candle?

B Don't tempt me! We're gonna light it!

A As a gimmick?

B No, as a sign.

A This is clever stuff. You are clever. Have you ever thought about a job in the
movies?

B Do you think I have the face for it?

A No but there's a job going in Blockbuster video!

B So united by the Spirit, let us, like Simeon, welcome Christ the Lord. For we
shall soon recognise him in the breaking of the bread.

Travel Reps

*A Drama that explores the time when Jesus is lost in Jerusalem at the age of twelve
(Luke 2:41-52)*

Cast: Tracy, Sonia (Two travel reps)

Tracy Hiya Sonia, how are you?

Sonia I've had enough!! That family in Room 42 have been playing up again. They've already blocked the toilet three times and flooded the bathroom and now they've got the nerve to complain about damp.

Tracy Is that the group who ate sardine sandwiches on the coach and stunk the place out for everyone?

Sonia Yes, but don't worry. I'll get my own back. There are games at the pool at 10 tomorrow morning and I'm gonna make sure that little Johnny is first in!

Tracy So, what else has been happening?

Sonia Well, apart from that, and the fact that I have to judge the Fancy Dress Competition tonight, everything is fine!

Tracy There was a nice family here on the second floor, this week. Really lovely.

Sonia They're still here. I just passed them in the corridor.

Tracy No they left yesterday, love.

Sonia No they're back now. Apparently they left yesterday morning, and on the journey home they realized they'd forgotten something. You'll never guess what!

Tracy Their toothbrush?

Sonia No.

Tracy Their suitcase?

Sonia No, that went to Jericho – as usual! No, they left the boy behind. They thought he was with the other members of the family. They rushed back in a panic and there he was in the temple.

Tracy No surprise there!

Sonia No, but the surprise came when the boy looked shocked at his parents. 'Didn't

you know I'd be in my Father's house,' he said. Well, the mother didn't know what to say.

Tracy

I can imagine how she felt. He'll go a long way, that boy!

Sonia

Anyway, Tracy, better get back to work. I've got a complaint from the third floor. Reckon they haven't got a sea view. Well, what do they expect if they come to Jerusalem. It's hardly the Riviera!

Sunday Focus

This drama explores Luke 8: 26—56 in the style of a TV football pundits programme

Cast: Des, Alan

Des Hello and welcome to Sunday Focus. If you've just joined us, you've missed a great performance by one of the up and coming stars of the game. He's certainly got us talking here in the studio. Alan, what's your verdict on the state of play so far?

Alan Des, I think he's doing well. In my opinion, he's even superseded last season's performance.

Des Better than last season?

Alan Of course! You can't fault him! Look at his performance this past week. He's playing away from home and he's a hat trick! First of all there's a spectacular bit of play with the outside half, who's like a mad man. He makes a superb challenge on Jesus. But Jesus is in control all the way! The way he released the demons for that man was so slick! Straight into the pigs! And then that woman makes contact with him. And then to top it off he plays the field and brings a bit of life to the game with the girl who's out of play through injury. You can't fault the boy!

Des Yes, what about that second manoeuvre? Can you talk us through it?

Alan Well, yes, Des—it was a wonderful manoeuvre—no one was expecting it! It's difficult to see exactly what happened, but there was definitely some physical contact made. She was quite sneaky. But it was positive play. Jesus is a powerful player and I think he has a great influence on the younger lads. It's just so typical of his kind of play. He's a quick thinker, he's versatile, he's unpredictable – which is why some people can't keep up with him! No wonder he's so popular.

Des What about injuries?

Alan Well, at the moment he's fighting fit! He's mentally focussed and he's physically able to deal with the rigours of daily life. I'm sure there are some injuries to come. In fact he even predicted it himself.

Des Can he cope with the pressure?

Alan Well, it's a game of two halves. Jesus still has to keep up the performance! But I'm excited by this boy. I think he can only go from strength to strength.

Des What about the pressures of public life?

Alan Yes, he has to be careful. He needs time to rest and pray and there'll always be people out to catch him out. But he's got a good team of players behind him.

Des Well, the popular opinion here is that Jesus is doing well. But there may be trouble ahead! That's all from Sunday focus. See you next time!

Around the World in a Balloon!

A Drama that explores the sending out of the apostles with the charge to travel lightly!

(Luke 9:1-6)

Cast: Jones, Captain

Jones We've got a problem, Sir.

Captain Really, Jones, can't you see I'm busy, man!

Jones But Sir...!

Captain Jones – I have just spotted an extremely rare speckled pink buzzard

Jones But Sir, this is really important!

Captain More important than a pink buzzard?!

Jones I'm afraid so, Sir!

Captain Well, what is it? You haven't eaten the emergency marmite again, have you?

Jones Euughh! No way! Marmite is disgusting.

Captain Thank goodness for that – I'm feeling a bit peckish.

Jones But Sir, we're losing height

Captain Losing height? What have you done with it, man?

Jones We're carrying too much weight, Sir!

Captain You have been eating that marmite, haven't you?

Jones No Sir. We've packed too much! We're being weighed down! We have to lose something. We're all going to die. I'm too young to die. There's so much I haven't done! Oh no, I never proposed to sweet Gwen, the love of my life!

Captain If you don't shut up, Jones, I'll be throwing you out! Now what's the situation?

Jones Well, Sir. We started this mission with too much luggage. I knew we shouldn't have brought the fridge!

Captain Are you saying we have to end this mission. We've come all this way to proclaim the kingdom of God and we've only come as far as the Jungle of Borneo.

Jones Actually that's the Forest of Dean, Sir!

Captain You what?

Jones It seems, Sir, if my calculations are correct – that we’ve been carrying too much...stuff. Stuff we didn’t really need. Stuff that’s been weighing us down. All we really needed to give the people was the good news of a kingdom – and we’ve brought a fridge full of marmite!

Captain Well just as well we did pack everything. Because we’ve got the emergency parachutes. We’re bailing out, Jones. What’s the matter? Why are you looking so glum?

Jones Parachute? Oh dear. I thought you said, ‘Pack the Parrot’s hoop.’

Captain The parrot’s hoop?! Are you mad? We don’t even have a parrot!

Jones I know, Sir. But we do have a hoop!

School Days

A Monologue Drama about the Healing of the Blind Man (Luke 9)

Cast: Teacher

Alright settle down, settle down! It's not a disco, you know!

Are you chewing? You. Yes, you! Then put it in the bin.

Why are you looking so tired, Watkins. Late night again was it?

Morgan, what are you wearing? Come here. I said, 'Come here!' You know this isn't regulation school-wear. I've told you before. Go home and change!

Right. Pay Attention. It's time for the Register. And try to sound as if you *want* to be here!

(A register is taken using the names of members of the congregation, ending with:)

Williams. Williams!

Where's Williams? He's where? Gone to Specsavers with his father? What for? To get his eyes tested?! His father's blind, boy! He's been blind since birth. Everyone knows that. He doesn't even know what his son looks like. Which is just as well. He's not exactly the best-looking boy in the world.

What do you mean his father can see? Jesus made him see?! Well, I've heard some excuses in my time but that takes the biscuit! Last time, he had to go to the hospital because his mother broke a fingernail. Before that he couldn't get to school because his legs fell off whilst he was asleep. And before that he had to fly to Switzerland to take part in International Peace relations. And the time before that, when he should have been sat here taking his GCSE in Religious Studies, he told me that his budgie had exploded in a freak accident involving a Cuttlefish! And now you say that 'miraculously' his father can see!

Who is this Jesus fellow anyway? I've heard about him. I'm not sure he's the kind of person that you young people should be hanging around with! He's a bit of a troublemaker by all accounts!

So he gave Williams' father his sight back? Is he some kind of laser treatment ophthalmic surgeon? How did he make him see then? With mud? And gob? He *spat* on Williams' father! Williams' father is nothing but a blind lazy beggar and deserves to be spat on. I mean he hasn't even got the get up and go to sell The Big Issue!

Jesus told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam? Sensible chap. Williams' father smells like a chimpanzee's armpit. Not of course that I'm used to smelling chimpanzee's armpits. I was acquitted for lack of evidence. Yes, I know the chimpanzee had done, as you say, a runner...anyway, enough of this nonsense!

So, when is this thing supposed to have happened? On the Sabbath? You mean this Jesus was actually *working* on the Sabbath? Has he got *no* respect for the law? This is getting more far fetched by the minute. Next thing you'll be telling me he's the 'light of the world?!' He *is* the light of the world?

Well, I tell you what now! You can tell Williams – when he comes back to school - that he's to come straight to my office. And if he thinks I'm going to believe all that rubbish then he's gravely mistaken. You can't pull the wool over my eyes, that easily. I've seen too much in my lifetime!

Right get your Text Books out and turn to page 53. Jones!, can you read from the top? Well, then you'll have to share with Lloyd. It's not too much to ask is it? He is your neighbour after all. You young people have your head in the clouds. Miraculous healings, indeed! Before long you'll be talking about people being raised from the dead!

Thank you for Calling

*A Drama that helps us to explore what we really mean by the Ministry of Healing.
It could be used before a sermon that provides teaching about that Ministry and could follow
any Gospel account of Jesus' healing Ministry.*

Cast: Dave, Automated Voice

Dave *(looking at a newspaper)* Well this is a turn up for the books. The church has finally reached the 21st century. I can now get everything I want over the phone! One number for 'Life and everything!' Well, I've tried everything. This is my last resort.

(Dials Up) 0800 792 364 578 927 819 654 129 353 100

(Sound Effect: Dialling, then ringing.)

Voice Thank you for calling 'Life and Everything'. Your call is important to us. To help us offer an efficient service please listen carefully to the following menu.

For Baptism, press 1

For Marriage Guidance, press 2

For prayer requests, press 3

For theological questions, press 4

For communion at home, press 5

For funeral arrangements, press 6

For confessions, press 7

For healing, press 8

For all other enquiries press 9

Or to hear these options again press zero.

Dave I need healing. So that was eight.

Voice You have selected healing.

For paralytics, press 1

For hearing problems, press 2

For demon possession, press 3

For eye problems, press 4

For back problems, press 5
For resurrection from the dead, press 6
For sore throats, coughs and cold, try beechams
For all other enquiries, press 7

Dave Um...eye problems. Four.

Voice You have selected eye problems.

For instant healing, press 1
For gradual healing, press 2
For discreet healing, press 3
For public healing, press 4
For all other options, press 5

Dave Um...I've waited long enough. It's gotta be Instant healing. One.

Voice You have selected instant healing

For healing from a distance, press 1
For healing with mud and spit, press 2
For healing by laying on of hands, press 3
For healing by anointing, press 4
Or to discuss your options with an operator press 5

Dave Um...I don't know. I think I need to talk about this with someone. Five.

Voice Sorry all our operators are busy at the moment. Please try again later.

Simon and his Mother in Law

Simon and his Mother-in-law engage in monologues with the 'audience' about the day Jesus came and healed her of her fever (Luke 8:14-15)

Cast: Simon, Simon's Mother-in-law

Mother I hadn't been well for days! Well, I do suffer with a few aches and pains, you know, but I don't let that stop me. I haven't got time to be ill. I've got things to do. I mean, the washing doesn't get done by itself, does it? The shopping has to be done. The dog walked. And who's gonna do the cooking? They said, 'Go to bed.' I said, 'I can't go to bed. Simon and the boys are coming. I've got to make a curry.' He loves my curry!

Simon I try to pop round every now and then, out of duty more than anything. I can't stay too long though cos she usually does my head in. Always nagging me about something. Always telling me I'm a disappointment to the family, and that her daughter should never have married me, telling me her daughter could have done better than someone who smells of fish all day. Anyway, she cooks a wicked curry.

Mother Well, I don't know if it was all that time I spent in the kitchen but I came over all hot and bothered. I gets the flushes now and again like. Well, you can expect it at my age – you know. But this was different. I felt all 'heady.' And then, just as I was about to soak the chick peas, over I went. There were chick peas everywhere. I woke up with my neighbour standing over me. She said, 'Right, it's bed for you.'

Simon I was just about to leave for my mother in law's when I had a phonecall from her neighbour. Says she's not well. She's ten times worse when she's not well. Get's a right head on her! Giving orders from her bed. Last time she was ill, she made me redecorate the lounge.

Mother Well, that was it. I was in bed for days. I had a right fever. They called the doctor round and all. No bed side manner, though! I told him, I said, do you

talk like that to all your patients? It's no wonder the NHS is like it is. Anyway, I was just about to tell him a few home truths about the Receptionist who works in his place, about how she takes the magazines home before we've had chance to read them, and I faints again.

Simon We turned up in the afternoon. We was starving cos we'd been up early. And of course, she's in bed and there's nothing to eat. We'd popped into Spars for a few things like, but you can't work all day on a Cheese and Onion Pastie! And I was really worried. I thought look out she's gonna have a go at me again now, giving orders from her sick bed. But no sign of her. Not a whimper. I thought, 'She must be ill!'

Mother Oh I was ill. And there I was, lying in bed, and I sees him standing over me. Not Simon! It wouldn't occur to him to come and see me. No, it was Jesus. And I'm weak as a kitten. Can't even lift my head. And I'm thinking, 'If I knew he was coming I'd have had Simon redecorate the lounge.' And he takes my hand. And then I just felt better. Not just a little bit better. But better. Really better. Back to normal.

Simon 'Oh no she's back to normal,' I said. 'You'll be sorry,' I said to Jesus. 'Any minute now she's gonna start. In ten minutes she'll have me weeding the garden.' 'But she hasn't got a garden,' said Jesus. 'I know,' I said, 'but she'll have me weeding someone's garden, I can guarantee it. As soon as she's out of bed and in that kitchen she'll start!'

Mother I went straight into the kitchen. My neighbour said, 'Now you take it easy.' Take it easy?! I don't know the meaning of the word. Besides, they were hungry, and I had to get my Lamb Bhuna on. I had things to do. I'm not gonna spend my time lazing around in bed when Jesus is in the house. 'Simon,' I said, 'Pop down the local and get some canned chick peas, and on the way back can you go and weed Elsie's garden? She's done her back in!'

Simon 'Told you,' I said to Jesus. 'She hates to see me sit down. Why did you have to go and spoil things!' 'Spoil things?' said Jesus. 'Well, you know what I mean,' I said. Anyway, by early evening, there were crowds of people outside all

wanting something from Jesus. I'd never seen such a disease ridden lot in my life. It was like the whole city was gathered at the front door.

Mother Word must have got around, 'cos by sunset the whole city were clammering around my front door. My front door! I said to Simon, 'Simon, there's a chamois under the sink, go and clean the windows. I don't want people talking.' Of course, he goes off muttering as usual. 'They look a bit hungry too. Do you think they want some curry. There's loads left over.'

Simon She wanted me to clean the windows and do some outside catering. She's back to normal. Except, there was something different about her. An eagerness to serve. She wanted to make sure everything was right for Jesus. Anyway, I wonder if he'd had enough of her, cos he got up early in the morning and left the house. We found him later. I was about to say, 'Now you know what it's like,' but I didn't think it was the right thing to say to him somehow. 'Everyone's looking for you,' I said. But he wanted to move on. He always wanted to move on. Like he had things to do and people to see. Like he was going somewhere. And so we were on the road again.

Mother They soon moved on. He had other towns to visit, see. Other places to go. Other people to see. I'll never forget that day, though. It was probably the best day of my life. I hope he liked my curry. Next time I'll do a Casserole. It must be tiring for him. I mean, 'Everyone was looking for him.'

Shop 'til you Drop!

Why did Jesus send away the rich man (Luke 18:8-30) Here's a drama to help explore the incident and what it says to us!

Characters: Melanie, Darran, Beryl, Bernard

- Melanie** Welcome to the new home shopping programme, *Shop til you Drop!* I'm Melanie and have we got some wonderful things in store for you – haven't we Darran?!
- Darran** Hi Melanie! Yes we have!
- Melanie** Darran, what ARE you wearing?
- Darran** Well, Melanie. I'm wearing a lovely hat. It's washable. It's foldable. It's reversible. It's a hat for every occasion. Going to a family wedding? Just don't know what to wear? The flexi-hat comes to the rescue. It's chic. It's economical.
- Melanie** But what about funerals, Darran?
- Darran** Well, Melanie. The flexi hat can be worn at even the most sombre occasion. Whether you're burying your grandmother or your goldfish, the flexi hat is the hat for you...with a handy pouch for keeping your handkerchief for that 'wet eye' moment.
- Melanie** Darran how much would a hat like that cost you? 50 pounds?
- Darran** No Melanie.
- Melanie** 30 pounds?
- Darran** No Melanie. Try again.
- Melanie** 20 pounds?
- Darran** No Melanie. The flexi hat comes at a very reasonably priced £12.50. And at that price why not buy one for the whole family.
- Melanie** Darran what a wonderful idea!
- Darran** Melanie, I notice you're looking different today.
- Melanie** Different Darran? Are you referring to my pale yet smooth complexion – which – can you believe it comes out of a bottle and costs a very reasonable

53p?

Darran No Melanie, I'm referring to your hair.

Melanie My hair?

Darran Yes, Melanie. Your hair. You haven't got any. Where's it all gone?

Melanie Ahh Darran. That's all thanks to the *Blazer Razor*. It fits in your handbag, which means you can shave your head at a moments notice. At home, in the garage, down the pub. It has twelve different functions, which means it can attack nasal hair and can even be used on your pets and mohair cardigans.

Darran That must be quite expensive, Melanie.

Melanie No Darran – it's an economical £2.50. We're practically giving them away. Let's take some calls. Line 1

Beryl Hello, it's Beryl Jones.

Melanie Hello Beryl. And what can we do for you?

Beryl Well, love, I'm really calling for my friend Maud. She'd quite like to have Darran's number.

Melanie Well, I'm sorry Beryl – but that's not for sale. Besides, everyone's got *his* number

Darran What's she like?

Melanie Not your type. Believe me! Line 2

Bernard Hello it's Bernard.

Melanie What are you interested in buying today, Bernard?

Bernard Nothing – I'm selling.

Melanie What do you mean 'selling'? This is a shopping programme.

Bernard Well, I've got lots of bargains to sell.

Melanie I'm sorry, love, but I'm not sure you've got the right end of the stick.

Bernard Well, I met this bloke called Jesus. And...well...it's like this – I'm quite well off. In fact I'm really well off. I'm rolling in it! I'm absolutely filthy rich. I don't want for anything.

Melanie Sounds like my kind of man, Darran.

Darran Mine too, Melanie.

Bernard Well I really wanted to follow Jesus. But he told me I could only follow him if I sold everything I owned and gave the money to the poor. And to be blunt – I

just couldn't do it. And it's been a few days now – and I've been thinking about it and I've decided to do it after all. At least, I'm gonna give it a go!

Melanie So let me clarify this for Darran – cos he's a bit slow. You want to follow Jesus but you have to sell everything before you can do it? No wonder he's not doing too well.

Bernard No. It's just that everything I owned was getting in the way. It was more important than anything else. More important than Jesus, if I'm honest. I was talking to the lads down the pub and they said it was a bit like that time Abram was asked to sacrifice his son. God was testing him, to see how important God was to him. It's all about priorities – it's all about putting things in order.

Darran Well, Bernard, we've got a nifty little filing system here and at only £15 including VAT, it's a bargain

Bernard The thing is I really do want to follow Jesus. I want him to be the most important thing in my life. And if this is what he wants me to do, then I think I should do it.

Melanie Well, Bernard. Or may I call you Berny? I'm sorry we can't help you on this one. Maybe you should try a car boot sale.

Bernard Yeh...trouble is...I can't find a car boot big enough.

Melanie Well, Darran. Interesting call.

Darran So does this mean that if I want to follow Jesus I have to give up my flexi hat?

Melanie No Darran – I think it means when your flexi hat becomes more important to you than Jesus - then it's time to eat your hat! Well, that's all we have time for on *Shop 'til you drop*. Join us next week when Darran will be trying to sell his mother and I'll be trying to flog a frog. So, from Darran and from me, it's Good night...and Happy Shopping!

The Sunday Surgery

*A Drama that helps to explore what we mean by Lent—
and what is a Lenten discipline anyway?!*

Cast: Emma, Vera

Presenter And now on Canon FM it's The Sunday Surgery with Emma Beeday and Dr. Ivor Itch

Emma Good Evening, welcome to The Sunday Surgery. If you have a problem or are worried about something then why not give us a call? Dr Itch is with us, giving some important medical advice and I am here to talk about 'YOU'! And our first caller this evening is from Vera. Vera are you there, love?

Vera Yes, I'm here.

Emma I understand you're phoning about your friend Barbara

Vera Yes, she's in the kitchen at the moment making a cup of tea. She's been in there rather a long time.

Emma So what's the problem?

Vera I don't think she can find the tea bags.

Emma No, I mean what's the problem with Barbara.

Vera Oh well, it's a bit embarrassing really. She's got ...

Emma What?

Vera She's got

Emma C'mon Vera - you can tell us.

Vera She's got

Emma Haemmaroids?

Vera No. She's got ...

Emma An embarrassing rash?

Vera No she's got *(pause)* 'Religion'

Emma Religion?

Vera Yes - she's taken it bad. She's going to church twice on a Sunday and on weekdays too. And if that wasn't bad enough I catually caught her reading her

bible. She says it's got something to do with Len. But she doesn't know anyone called Len. I really don't know what to do!

Emma Ah I see what's happening here. It's do with "Lent." It appears that she's taken on a Lenten discipline.

Vera That sounds serious. Can she get a prescription for that?

Emma No!

Vera Not even some cream over the counter?

Emma No!

Vera Is there a help line number I could give her? Or a support group she could join?

Emma No. It's a good thing you see!

Vera A good thing? Oh. So she hasn't got a problem then?

Emma No, in fact it will do her a lot of good. Lent is a season to spend some time working on your relationship with God.

Vera I always thought she was on good terms with him. I mean, I know she likes going to the bingo - but that doesn't make her a bad person does it?

Emma Well, Vera, there's always room for improvement, you see. Barbara is just trying to improve things and become a better friend of God. Religion isn't just for crackpots - though of course they are welcome too! No - the Christian Life is for everyone. It's not meant to be boring and dull. It's exciting and worthwhile. It's what makes life worth living. Barbara is just making sure that things stay that way. Does that help you at all, Vera?

Vera Yes. It does. Thank you. I feel so much better now

Emma You will let us know how things go with Barbara, won't you?

Vera Yes of course I will. Anyway I must go. Here's Barbara with the tea. Thank you very much, Emma.

Emma Vera there. And another problem solved on the Sunday Surgery. Keep your calls coming in. And stay listening because we have many more problems just waiting to be solved.

Taken!

A Drama that prompts us to think about what the world is like—and why—and why Jesus went to the cross to put right the wrongs and show us how to love.

Cast: Beryl, Maud

Beryl Oh I had a strange experience last night Maud!

Maud Strange? What do you mean - strange? You haven't been on that Lucozade again have you. You know what happens when you take those energy drinks.

Beryl No, I swear. I haven't touched an energy drink in weeks. No. I was in the garden.

I had heard a strange noise, so I went out to investigate. It was like a flapping noise. And I discovered that I'd left a pair of our Bob's Y fronts on the line.

Maud Well it was a lovely drying day yesterday, wasn't it love?

Beryl Yes, love, really bright and breezy. But that's not all that happened. As I stretched to the washing line to retrieve Bob's Y fronts, suddenly there was a bright light!

Maud A bright light! Are you sure you hadn't been on those energy drinks?

Beryl No! I hadn't touched a drop. There was a bright light.

Maud God?

Beryl No aliens! Maud, I've been taken!

Maud Taken? What do you mean 'Taken'?

Beryl Taken. Taken by aliens. I'm being serious. Last night, I was taken by aliens.

(Dramatic Pause)

Beryl I was there for three weeks altogether

Maud Three Weeks?

Beryl Well time is a different concept on the Planet Clooney!

Maud The Planet Clooney?!

Beryl Yes. That's what it was called. Clooney. It was a bit like a package holiday, really. All inclusive - breakfast, evening meal. En-suite too - with a nice little sink for you to soak your feet in!

Maud That's a beeday love!

Beryl I don't know what it's called Maud, but it came in handy. My ankles were swollen by week two.

Maud So what did they do with you on the Planet Clooney?

Beryl They conducted experiments on me, Maud. They probed me like I've never been probed before. And questions! Well, I've never been asked so many questions.

Maud Well not since you were arrested for shoplifting in Asdas.

Beryl Yes, but I wasn't well then love, were you?

Maud So what kind of questions did they ask?

Beryl Well they wanted to know a lot about 'Countdown.' Apparently Carol Vorderman is big on Clooney. But they also asked me more serious questions.

Maud Ooh, like what?

Beryl They wanted to know about war and destruction.

 They wanted to know why some people love each other and other people hate each other.

 They wanted to know about crime and poverty.

 They wanted to know why some people live in 100 bed mansions and others sleep in shop doorways at night.

 They wanted to know why I throw enough food away in a month to feed a family in Africa for a year.

 They wanted to know why some people are nursed and given medical care and others with little money don't.

 They wanted to know why some people with different colour skin are treated differently.

 They wanted to know why - to enjoy a cup of tea in one country, people are exploited in another.

Maud No wonder you were there for three weeks! So were you able to answer their questions?

Beryl Not all of them. Do you know, love - I was lost for words.

Maud Lost for words?! Well that's not like you! You can usually talk a chair to sleep!

Beryl That's very true. But you see love. I had to agree with them.

Maud Well I never thought I'd see the day that you'd be agreeing with an alien.

Beryl Well to be fair to them, they talked sense!

Maud It's ridiculous isn't it? We never learn do we? Us Humans.

Beryl Well there's just not enough love in the world is there? I was thinking about Jesus, you know. He knows exactly what we're like. That's why he went to the cross. That's why he suffered and died and rose again. To show us where we're going wrong - and how to put it right.

Maud And when you see Jesus on the cross - that's ultimate love.

Beryl I didn't need to be taken by aliens to see that. It was there all along. Staring me in the face. Staring 'us' in the face. Anyway, it's been a long day. Do you know what I fancy now?

Maud Not another Lucozade?

Beryl No, I told you. I've given up those energy drinks.

Maud Well I never thought I'd hear it.

Beryl No, I'm gonna go home and have a nice chunk of Justin Timberlake.

Maud Beryl?!

Beryl What? Oh don't be stupid. On Clooney, a Justin Timberlake is a chocolate bar.

Commercial Break

A Drama for voices in the style of a Radio Programme to help explore the difficulty and sacrifice that lies at the heart of Christian discipleship, expressed most eloquently in the image of Jesus on the cross (Luke 14:27)

- Cast:** Three Voices for the first three adverts, Voice 1, Voice 2
- Voice A** We'll be right back after this commercial break. Don't go away!
- Voice B** Have you had an accident at home, in the office, or in the street? An accident that wasn't your fault? Then be more careful!
- Voice C** Fed up of being rejected for a mortgage time and time again? Got bad credit rating? In debt and can't get out of it? Then get a job!
- Voice 1** (In a fake American accent) The Christian Life! It's never been easier! And now because of this new, easy to read, easy to follow and easy to keep manual, you too can be a successful Christian! Expertly laminated for long life, and complying with all Health and Safety Regulations, the manual is called 'Four Easy Steps to Being a Christian.' And it does exactly what it says on the front! Here's how easy it is!
- Step One: Accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour.
- Step Two: Pray and read the Bible
- Step Three: By now all your problems will be over
- Step Four: Sit back and enjoy. Mmmmm, Life is good!
- Voice 2** Wait a minute! It's not like that at all! Where did you get that from?
- Voice 1** What? My fake American accent?
- Voice 2** No!
- Voice 1** My cheesy grin?
- Voice 2** No!
- Voice 1** My fake sun tan?
- Voice 2** No!
- Voice 1** The annoying way my voice goes up and down when I get excited?
- Voice 2** No, that instruction manual. Where did you get it from?

Voice 1 This easy to read manual isn't available in your shops but for only 15.99, yes, 15.99 it can be yours for life. It's fireproof, it's waterproof and bomb proof!

Voice 2 They're not the instructions Jesus gave.

Voice 1 And how can you be so sure of that?

Voice 2 (With bible in hand). Try looking at this.

Step One: All who wish to follow Jesus should take up their cross and follow him.

Step Two: Unless a grain of wheat dies and falls to the ground it will bear no fruit.

Step Three: Anyone who endures to the end will gain everlasting life.

Voice 1 Hey man, are you saying that the Christian Life isn't all it's cracked up to be?

Voice 2 The Christian Life is wonderful! But that doesn't mean it's always easy. It doesn't make our problems disappear. In fact, sometimes it creates problems for us! Jesus never promised us an easy life! In fact he tells us that life will be difficult at times and that following him will be difficult.

Voice 1 Hey man, sounds a bit ... dangerous.

Voice 2 If you want to use the proper jargon, it's about 'Sacrifice'

Voice 2 Sacra what?

Voice 1 Sacrifice. The Christian life demands Sacrifice. When Jesus was on the mountain, the apostles thought they could stay there – because it was comfortable, wonderful, amazing! But Jesus knew that they couldn't and shouldn't stay there. He needed to get on with the job and that was to be done below – in the valley! But by glimpsing his glory they were strengthened to face up to what would happen.

Voice 1 Which was?

Voice 2 At the heart of our Faith is a man on the cross. Jesus loved us so much that he took up his cross. The really important thing to remember is that it didn't end there. There's LIFE even after sacrifice and death. Jesus rose from the dead!

Voice 1 So I can throw these instructions away then?

Voice 2 Yes. Here, use my handy portable paper shredder available at only 13.99. Yes, that's 13.99

Voice 1 Thanks

Voice 2

Hey, don't be down about it though. Just be realistic. And when things are difficult – remember Jesus on the cross. He's been there, and helps us through our bad times. Don't give up. Try to get on. Take up your cross and follow Jesus.

The Big City

A Drama that explores the events of Palm Sunday (Luke 19:28 –47)

Cast: Mike, Matt

Voice Welcome to *The Big City*! And here's your host . . . It's Matt Ropolis!

Matt Hello this is *The Big City*! The TV Programme that lets you know what's happening in the Big City. We go to the Big City so you don't have to! Tonight on *The Big City* we take a peek at Jerusalem, a city which welcomes thousands of visitors every year. And, as usual, we have our roving reporter Mike Less. So what's happening in the Big City tonight, Mike?

Mike Well, you've caught us at a very special time of year. It's the holiday season in Jerusalem. Thousands of people have travelled far and wide to celebrate the Passover Holiday.

Matt So lots going on there? Any strange or amusing anecdotes to tell?

Mike Well, yes! We had a bit of an incident yesterday. Some important person arrived.

Matt Tell us about this V.I.P., Mike

Mike Well apparently it was a King.

Matt A King?! I expect he arrived with a splendid cortege? What was it? A Rolls Royce? A stretch Limousine?

Mike No - a donkey!

Matt A donkey?

Mike Yep a donkey!

Matt Strange King, Mike!

Mike Well there was a great sense of hysteria in the city when he arrived. Lots of pushing and shouting. At one stage the police had to engage in a bit of crowd control.

Matt So where is he now? I suppose he's taken the Penthouse suite in The Jerusalem Hilton?

Mike No—apparently he's taken private accommodation. He was last seen in a

small upstairs room.

Matt Is that where he'll be celebrating the Passover?

Mike It looks like it, Matt

Matt Some King!

Mike Yeh - we're getting the feeling that he's a different kind of King. He seems a bit more down to earth than other kings we've known in the past!

Matt And what do we know about him?

Mike Well, apparently, and this is only rumour remember, he's actually a descendent of King David, so in a way it's kind of ironic that he should have such a welcome in his own city!

Matt Well I'm sure we'll be coming back to you later in the programme to find out the latest. And we'll also be discovering how the Religious leaders will be spending this Passover and how the Restaurants are coping with the crowds!

Breakfast News

A Drama for Holy Week

Cast: Anna Fudd Newsreader (sat behind a newsdesk), Dan Reporter (to left of stage), Derek Weatherman (to right of stage), Reverend Knowital - Religious Expert (sat at newsdesk)

Anna Good Morning. Welcome to Breakfast News. I'm Anna Fudd. News is breaking as we speak and so we go straight over to our reporter who's expecting an important arrival in the city

Dan Yes Anna. We are awaiting a rather important King to the city today. His arrival has been expected for some time now and there's been a great deal of excitement around. And there is . . hang on . . . I don't believe this. There appears to be . . . yes I think it is . . . yes . . . it's a man on a donkey.

Anna Well, I must apologize for my colleague there. He seems to have gone quite mad! I thought you said you were expecting a King!

Dan Yes . . .but he appears to be a different kind of king. The crowds seem to like him anyway.

Anna What's the situation there at the moment, Dan.?

Dan Well the crowd is getting quite hysterical. I haven't seen scenes like this in a long time.

Anna So he's obviously very popular with the people despite his interesting mode of transport. Do keep us informed. And now over to Derek with the weather.

Weather Things are bright and breezy over Jerusalem, at the moment. The sun is shining but there's a slight chill early evening. Anna.

Anna And now back to Dan, who's on the scene at Jerusalem.

Reporter Yes, there's been a rather dramatic turn of events. King Jesus was enjoying a meal with his friends in very intimate and humble surroundings in a small upstairs room of a house. It's reported that they went for a stroll along the mountain top and were accosted by a group of soldiers who arrested him. He

was taken to the governor's house for questioning.

Anna What are the charges brought against him, Dan?

Reporter At this moment, we're not quite sure. We've had no word from inside the governor's house, but it appears that Jesus is still being questioned by the authorities as we speak. We're expected to have a statement any moment. Hang on...it's just coming through. . . Jesus, yes . . . Jesus has been arrested, it has been confirmed. He has been put on trial, and is receiving his sentence. Oh this is bad. This is very bad. This is unprecedented. He 's been sentenced to death.

Anna Very disturbing events there. Thank you, Dan. We'll get back to you later. with an update. Now over to the weather.

Derek There's a slight chill in the air in Jerusalem at the moment.

Anna Thank you. Well, back to the main headline. Jesus has risen in popularity over the last few months but his popularity has brought with it some controversy and opposition. He's run up against the religious and civil authorities. Despite healing many people and being a very loving and compassionate person he seems to have come to very unfortunate circumstances. Now we go over to Dan with an update on events.

Dan *(more solemn)* Anna, at mid morning Jesus was seen to be carrying his instrument of execution through the streets of Jerusalem. He reached the hill, nicknamed by locals as 'The Place of the Skull', and there he was nailed to a cross. At 3 p.m. this afternoon he died. *(Pause)* Back to you in the studio.

Anna *(lost for words)*. Over to the weather.

Weather Well there's been a rather freak incident all across the land. Things went dark and cold at about 3 p.m this afternoon. We can't really explain what happened. There seems to be no natural explanation. We weren't expecting an eclipse. But things are rather frightening out there. Our advice: stay indoors until things improve.

Anna Well, we have with us our religious expert, the Reverend Knowitall. Reverend Knowitall, How do you explain the situation surrounding the death of this King, Jesus?

Reverend Well, obviously Jesus upset many people. Maybe they were jealous or felt threatened in some way.

Anna But who is responsible for his death?

Reverend I think we all have a part to play in his death. We have all failed in so many ways. Jesus was extremely compassionate and loving. His whole life witnessed to God's love for us. Unfortunately, there have been times when we rejected his love. I think what his death proves is how much he really loves us. You see: he loves us to death.

Anna It's not very good news is it?

Reverend Well today is a very dark day. But the news is good in the sense that we have finally realized the extent to which God loves us. Who knows, in years to come, the day on which he died, may even come to be known as Good Friday?!

Anna So that's the end of that, then?

Reverend Oh no. There's plenty more to come. Jesus predicted that he would overcome death and rise again.

Anna So we can expect some more news to break soon then?

Reverend Yes, we certainly haven't heard the last of Jesus.

Plain Talking

This drama explores the incident of Jesus being asked by the Jews to tell them plainly if he is the Messiah (John 10: 22 –39)

Cast: Jeremy Paxperson (rude, belligerent, direct and impatient!)
Jesus.

Jeremy Good Evening, I'm Jeremy Paxperson and welcome to Plain Talking. The current affairs programme that does some plain talking and expects the same from our guests. First up, is Jesus. Now, here's a man who has a lot to say for himself. Stirring up people across the country, and at the same time getting himself quite a following. Within the last few minutes he's been spotted walking in Solomon's Porch in the Temple, so we're going across to him now to ask him who he thinks he is! Jesus, welcome to Plain Talking. Now don't keep us in suspense. Tell us, are you the Messiah? And tell us plainly please.

Jesus I've already told you, and you don't believe.

Jeremy Are you the Messiah?

Jesus The works that I do in my Father's name speak for me; but you don't believe, because you don't belong to my sheep

Jeremy Tell us plainly. Are you the Messiah?

Jesus The sheep that belong to me, listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me

Jeremy Are you the Messiah?

Jesus I give them eternal life, and they will never be lost. No one will ever steal them from me.

Jeremy Are....you....the Messiah?

Jesus The Father who gave them to me is greater than anyone, and no one can steal from the Father.

Jeremy Listen, I'll ask you again, tell us plainly. Are you the Messiah?

Jesus The Father and I are one.

Jeremy Well that says it all really. Who do you think you are?! Are you saying you're

equal to God?! I've heard enough. Though it's nothing that a good beating wouldn't sort out. His time will come. That's all from Plain Talking. I've been Jeremy Paxperson. Goodnight.

High Places

A Drama for Ascension Day (Luke 24:50-53)

Several people walk on, talking as they go along. When they have 'gone on', three others walk down, dressed as hikers - woolly cap, rucksack, waterproof, hiking boots, stick. One of them is tired looking and stops halfway to take a breath.

Cast: Peter, James, John

Peter What's the matter now?

James I'm tired!

John It's not far now

James I didn't realise that being an apostle was so tiring. All I've done is climb mountains.

Peter You know what you need?

James A doctor?

Peter No. . . a good pair of walking boots.

James I need a new pair of legs. Mine have given out.

John Look he's gone on ahead of us

James Well, you should be used to that by now

Peter Come on . . . or we'll never get there

James Where are we going anyway?

Peter I don't know - don't ask questions. Just follow!

James *(gets up reluctantly)*. Mountains, mountains, always mountains.
(They walk onwards to the front). First there was that mountain - you know, where he took the three of us

Peter Yeah - but it was worth it. Remember the sight?!

Jesus looked amazing.

John And we got to meet Moses and Elijah. Now not many people can say *that*.

Peter *(Peter looks)* He's always bringing us up *here*. He brought us up here that night he was arrested.

James Yeh - that's a night I'd rather not remember.

Peter Don't be silly - Jesus *wanted* us to remember. "Do this is memory of me," he said. We'll never forget that night.

John He died on a mountain too

James *(sorrowful)*. Yeh that was one mountain I didn't climb. And it was on a mountain, wasn't it, that he gave that long sermon? Do you remember?

Peter Which sermon?

James *(thinking)*. You know . . .the sermon on the...er....the sermon on the the sermon on the...

Peter Mount?

James Yeh. That's right. The sermon on the mount. And what about the time we were stuck on that mountain side -thousands of people and not a Macdonald's in sight.

Peter Yeh - but he came up with the goods.

John Yeh - *that* was a packed lunch to remember.
(They have now joined the other apostles)

Peter *(looks ahead and then urges James)* Come on...! Look . . .he's going!

James Where?

Peter Shh....listen. *(They stand and gaze)*. Wait in Jerusalem' he said.

James Thank God for that - I'm fed up walking.

Peter He says he's gonna send someone. The Holy Spirit.

James Just when we thought things had calmed down.

Peter Calmed down? It's all about to start.

John I think there's a few things he wants us to do.

James *(nods in acknowledgement and then looks around at the scenery)* It's a wonderful view from up here, isn't it?

Peter *(Peter looks around too)* Yeh! Sure is

James He's always taking us to high places.
(All Freeze)

Back in Time?

A Drama for Pentecost that can also be used at any time to explore who the Holy Spirit is.

Maybe appropriate for a Confirmation? (Acts 2)

Cast: Professor Gene Pool, Professor Ivor Ni-Kew

- Gene** Tonight, we are going to take you back in time. Not 10 years. Not 50 years. Not even a hundred years. Not to the last millennium. Not even back to the day that *(insert name of priest or youth leader)* was born – but beyond! We are going to take you right back – to the beginning of time!
- Ivor** Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, it's an exciting journey. It's a project that has taken years to complete. Painstaking research by hundreds of experts has enabled us to reconstruct what it was 'actually like' when the world was created.
- Gene** Biblical scholarship, scientific analysis and computer technology have united to provide an accurate picture of what it was like before there was anything.
- Ivor** Yes, tonight, is an exclusive revelation that God, the Big One, He who is to be obeyed, the All Powerful, Majestic and Wonderful actually created the world in a very, very unusual way.
- Gene** Imagine, if you will, the chaos that was before God – nothing to write home about at all. In fact - no home to write to. Nothing to write with. No PC or Word Processor – not even a Bic pen or a Post it Note. Just chaos. A big massive mess.
- Ivor** This is how the bible describes it. In the book of Genesis we read that "The earth was a vast waste, darkness covered the deep."
- Gene** A bit like Splott really!
- Ivor** No – it was worse. It was chaotic. A wasteland. Dark and cold.
- Gene** Absolutely horrid!
- Ivor** This was worse than *(Insert local reference)* on a Saturday night!
- Gene** But then it all started.
- Ivor** *(Reads from the Bible)* "In the beginning God created the heavens and the

earth. The earth was a vast waste, darkness covered the deep, and the Spirit of God *hoovered* over the surface of the water. God said, Let there be light..."

Gene *(interrupting)* Hoovered?

Ivor What?

Gene Hoovered! You said 'Hoovered!'

Ivor That's what it says here. *(Reading)* "The Spirit of God *hoovered* over the surface of the water."

Gene It doesn't say '*hoovered*.' It says hovered. Not hoovered! God didn't use a Dyson. He hovered. Like a dove! He hovered over the waters of chaos, bringing order and life.

Ivor Oh. *(Looking disappointed. He pauses to think)*. I get it. He *hovered*. Ok. *(He reads)* The Spirit of God *hovered*d over the surface of the water." *(Stops to think)* So things were a bit chaotic then?

Gene Very Chaotic.

Ivor A bit . . . messy?

Gene You could say that!

Ivor So he did do a bit of a 'clean up' then?

Gene What? Yes. I suppose so!

Ivor Are you sure he didn't *hoover*?

Gene I am absolutely positive that God didn't create the world by *hoovering*!

Ivor It would have been wicked though if he had! Can you imagine it!

Gene Do you mind? There's a point to this presentation and you are messing it up! God's Spirit has been present working in the world since the beginning of creation. The same Spirit that 'hovered' over the surface of the waters, is the same Spirit that 'hovered' over Mary forming Jesus in her womb.

Ivor Yes. *(turning to a place in the Bible)*. The Angel Gabriel greeted Mary and said 'Hail highly favoured one. The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women' He told her she'd been chosen by God to be the mother of the Saviour. We are told in Scripture that the Spirit of God overshadowed her.

Gene Well done. You were obviously paying attention in Sunday School.

Ivor So can I just clarify this? Mary was home alone at the time?

Gene Yes, I guess so.

Ivor Doing anything in particular, was she?

Gene I don't know what she was doing. The Bible's a bit quiet on that one.

Ivor Well, how do you know she wasn't doing a bit of spring-cleaning when the angel came in?

Gene I don't.

Ivor So she could have been *hoovering* then?

Gene Yes she could have been *hoovering*! In a very primitive way. She probably just had a sweeper – or a brush - or a broom or something. Hang on! You're obsessed with cleaning! You should get out more often.

Ivor I hate going out!

Gene What do you mean, you hate going out?

Ivor Well, there's so much litter about. Everywhere you go, there are crisp packets, cigarettes stubs, empty cans of lager.

Gene You've been to the vicarage, haven't you?

Ivor Yeh!

Gene Anyway, where was I? It's also the same Holy Spirit who empowered Jesus at his Baptism. And it's the same Spirit that was poured out on the church at Pentecost .

Ivor So what happened at Pentecost then?

Gene Mary and the Apostles were gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem.

Ivor A bit of a crowd!

Gene Yeh.

Ivor I bet they made a mess! I bet there was a lot of cleaning up to do after they'd been there! Don't get me wrong, I like the guys, but they're only human after all!

Gene Of course they're only human! But that's a good point. The Holy Spirit strengthens us to follow Jesus. We can't do anything on our own. Jesus calls the Holy Spirit an Advocate and a Comforter. He's someone who helps us and makes things possible!

Ivor So what else happened on the day of Pentecost?

Gene Well, as many as three thousand people were baptized!

Ivor That's amazing. Three thousand! So this Holy Spirit then? What's happened

to him?

Gene Nothing's happened to him. Jesus said he would be with us forever. The Holy Spirit helps us to follow Jesus. We can't do anything on our own.

Ivor So what does this Holy Spirit look like?

Gene Well you can't see him. But he's pictured in lots of different ways. Sometimes the Spirit is shown as a dove – gentle, calm, peaceful and serene. But there's also another image – a Celtic image – of the Holy Spirit as a Wild Goose, flapping about, stirring things up, causing a commotion.

Ivor Making a mess!

Gene Yes, I suppose he does mess things up. The Holy Spirit, as well as being a comforter, challenges and changes us.

Ivor Ladies and Gentlemen, forget about the beginning of time. Forget about Dysons! We have another exciting revelation.

Gene And it's as old as time. Jesus promised to send his Holy Spirit upon his Church.

Ivor It's this Holy Spirit who will fill our lives and helps us to follow Jesus.

Gene And you don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand that!

Talk of the Town

A Drama for Pentecost (Acts 2)

*A Rap style drama that can be brought to life with appropriate movement and used for any
number of people*

Newspaper sellers:

Read all about it!

Wind and flame extravaganza in Jerusalem suburb

3,000 people baptised.

Read all about it!!!

Read all about it!

Big shake up in Jerusalem

Apostles take Pentecost by Storm!

Read all about it!

Read all about it!

God paints the town red at Pentecost Party

Read all about it!

Rappers:

Read all about it - it's the Talk of the Town

Of the day when God sent the Holy Spirit down.

The followers of Jesus were in a room upstairs

Gathered together - joined - in - prayer!

There was the sound of a wind and mighty flame

That was the sign that the Holy Spirit came!

Jerusalem was full of lots of different folk

It was to all these people that Peter spoke.

He spoke in a way that all could understand
'Cos the message of Jesus is for all from every land.

"You killed Jesus!" Peter said
"But three days later he was raised from the dead!"

So on that day that the Holy Spirit came!
3,000 people took note of Jesus' flame!

So today - like then - it's the talk of the town
It's the day when God sent the Holy Spirit down

With the Holy Spirit with us there's no need to be scared:
SO GO ON OUT - AND PAINT THE TOWN RED!

On the Door

A Drama that helps to explore Baptism and what it means to be 'in' the Church!

Cast: Doorman (DM) – black suit, white shirt, black tie, coat, Dave

The Doorman is stood centrally with arms folded. Dave approaches

DM Stop there!

Dave What?

DM I said, just stop there!

Dave Why?

DM *(looks him up and down)* Sorry, Sir, you can't come in.

Dave What do you mean? I can't come in?

DM Sorry, Sir. House rules. You can't come in without a tie.

Dave I'm *wearing* a tie!

DM Yes but it's not a very nice tie, is it, Sir. I mean a tie like that could really upset people.

Dave But it's my favourite tie!

DM Well, maybe we could make some sort of concession for the tie, but it's the shoes, Sir. You can't come in wearing those shoes.

Dave What's wrong with my shoes?

DM Wrong colour, Sir.

Dave Wrong colour?!

DM Wrong colour. And as for those glasses! Should have gone to Specsavers!

Dave I've just come back from Specsavers! This is ridiculous.

DM I know! I can't imagine what you were thinking!

Dave I was thinking that I'd just like to go along to church!

DM To Church?

Dave Yes, church! It's been some years since I've been but I've decided to give it another go! And to be quite frank it's no wonder no one goes to church – with this kind of attitude!

DM On the contrary, the church down the road is packed! Some sort of event for

young people!

Dave So, let me get this right, you're not gonna let me in to church?

DM I think we have some crossed wires, sir.

Dave Crossed wires?! My wires are very crossed! Now can I come in or not?

DM No sir. You see, this isn't a church. That's two doors down.

Dave Two doors down?

DM Yes, try there. They'll let anyone in! Even the likes of you will get in! Though I think you're chancing it with your hair!

Dave There's nothing wrong with my hair!

DM Well, I suppose it matches your tie!

Dave So, what exactly is this place?

DM It's a private club, Sir, for 'distinguished' people.

Dave And what kind of 'distinguished' people come here.

DM Oh there's no one here, sir. The dress code is a bit particular, you see. No one's been allowed through these doors for twelve years.

Dave What's the point of that?

DM Standards, sir! We have to keep up the standards!

Dave What's the point of having a place that no one is allowed into?

DM Hey, don't get at me - I just work here.

Dave It's just that I'm trying to get to church – my friend is being baptised tonight – they're kind of letting him into the life of the church.

DM Has he got hair like you?

Dave No he has not!

DM Oh well, guess that's why they're letting him in, then.

Dave They're letting him in because he wants to be a Christian. He wants to follow Jesus.

DM Sounds a bit dodgy to me, Sir, if you don't mind me saying.

Dave Dodgy? There's nothing dodgy about it! It's a wonderful thing!

DM I'll have to take your word for that, Sir!

Dave Anyway, thanks for your help. I'm going to church now.

DM Be careful, sir. All kinds of things happen there.

Dave Well at least there's more life there than here.

DM That's what I understand. Been thinking of going myself.

Dave Why don't you come with me.

DM Can't leave the door, sir. We get all kinds of people trying to get in.

Caught in the Act!

A drama that helps to explore attitudes to 'going to church' and designed to spark off discussion and debate

Cast: Colin, Celia

Colin *(calls)* Hello Darling! What a day I've had at the office! I'm absolutely exhausted! Darling? Darling, what's the matter?

Celia *(holding a piece of paper in her hand)* What's this?

Colin What?

Celia This!

Colin *(timidly)* Erm...it looks like ... a church news sheet?

Celia A Church news sheet! Aren't you going to ask me where I found it?

Colin *(timidly)* Um...where did you find it?!

Celia In *your* coat pocket!

Colin And what have you been doing going through my coat pockets?!

Celia Don't try to get me off the subject – you've been to church, haven't you? Haven't you?

Colin Darling, I'm sorry I couldn't stop myself. I had this urge – what with Christmas and everything!

Celia And that's what hurts the most – Christmas is supposed to be a time for family and you've been sneaking off to church!

Colin It all happened so fast.

Celia What were you thinking of?

Colin I wasn't thinking. I didn't plan for this to happen. I just kind of 'wandered' in.

Celia And what did you get up to with this....'church.'

Colin Well, I just had a bit of a pray – I wanted to see what it felt like!

Celia I can't bear to hear anymore!

Colin I was thinking about you all the time!

Celia Oh, and that's supposed to make me feel better is it? How could I have been so stupid? I should have listened to my mother. I should never have married you!

Colin I don't know what to say. I feel as if I've let you down.

Celia Let me down? Let me down! And what about the children?

Colin Can't we keep the children out of this?

Celia *You* can tell them! You can tell them what their father has been up to!

Colin That's really not necessary

Celia Not necessary? Not necessary!

Colin No – it's not necessary. You see, they came with me, too.

Celia You took my children to that church!

Colin Well, as I said, we were just passing the church and....

Celia Stop. I don't want to hear any more! I feel so betrayed!

Colin Can't we just put this behind us? Pretend it never happened. Make a fresh start?

Celia From now on, every time I look at you, I'll see you and that... 'church'.

Colin I'm sorry, Darling.

Celia And are you going to this church again?

Colin You could always come with me. Give it a try.

Celia Give it a try?! Are you mad?!

Colin I never thought you'd take it as bad as this.

Celia What on earth made you think that?

Colin Because darling, you're the Vicar. I thought you would have been pleased.

Celia There's only one thing that you can do to make it up to me

Colin Anything, Darling, anything. Name it. I just want things to be the same as they always were.

Celia Will you go on the Reading Rota? Mrs Jones has a stomach bug and can't make it next Sunday.

What Has the Church Ever Given to Us?

This sketch is unashamedly inspired by the comedy genius of a well-known Monty Python Sketch and uses it to look at what the Church has really done to change things! It's particularly fun to get an adult to play the part of one of the teenagers, especially Dave

Cast: Dave, Brian, Laura, Selina

Dave OK. So the surprise is over...finally! And where have you brought us? You've brought us ... to church! Not a very exciting place to be, is it? Not exactly the best place you could have brought us! After all - what has the church ever given to us?

Others Yeh - you're right. (everyone mutters together). What has the church ever given to us?

Brian The message of eternal life?

Dave What?! Well, yes (sarcastically) apart from the message of eternal life (tuts as if Brian is stupid!) what has the church ever given to us?

Laura Holy Scripture, arguably one the most inspirational collections of literature in the world.

Dave Ok, apart from the Scriptures and the message of eternal life, what has the church ever given to us?

Selina The Bread of Life?

Dave Ok, Yeh. I admit. Apart from the bread of life given to us in the Eucharist, Holy Scripture, which is arguably among the most inspirational collections of literature in the world and the message of eternal life - what has the church ever given to us?

Brian Forgiveness of sins?

Laura Yeh. He's right. We do get forgiveness of sins. I was forgiven only yesterday. Went to see the priest and he did the business.

Dave Ok, apart from: forgiveness of sins. The Bread of Life. The Scriptures which is arguably among the most inspirational collections of writing in the world and the message of eternal life - what has the church ever given to us?

Selina Healing. The church has always had a ministry of healing for the sick.

Dave Ok, apart from: healing. Forgiveness of sins. The Bread of Life. The Scriptures which is arguably among the most inspirational collections of writing in the world and the message of eternal life - what has the church ever given to us?

Laura Education.

Dave Education?! Education?!

Laura Yes. Education. Our educational system is founded on Christian principles. And when there was no state provision for the under classes the church provided it.

Dave Ok. Apart from: Education. Healing of the Sick. Forgiveness of sins. The Bread of Life. The Scriptures which are arguably among the most inspirational collections of writing in the world and the message of eternal life - what has the church ever given to us?

Brian The foundation of our modern day laws? Many of our laws are a result of a Christian society.

Dave Ok. Apart from: The foundation of our modern day laws. Education. Healing. Forgiveness of sins. The Bread of Life. The Scriptures which are arguably among the most inspirational collections of writing in the world and the message of eternal life - what has the church ever given to us?

Selina Individuals who have stood up and spoken out against injustice and oppression - like Oscar Romero, Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Dave Ok. Apart from: Individuals who have spoken out against injustice, the foundation of our modern day laws. Education. Healing. Forgiveness of sins. The Bread of Life. The Scriptures which are arguably among the most inspirational collections of writing in the world and the message of eternal life - what has the church ever given to us?

Brian Pastoral care. When my mother was ill - the priest came every week to minister to her.

Selina Yeh that's right - he did.

Dave Ok. Apart from: Pastoral Care. Individuals who have spoken out against injustice. The foundation of our modern day laws. Education. Forgiveness of sins. The Bread of Life. The Scriptures which are arguably among the most

inspirational collections of writing in the world and the message of eternal life
- what has the church ever given to us? Nothing. That's what I say! Nothing!

Laura Hope?

Dave Hope?! Hope?!

Laura Yeh. The church gives us hope in a dark and confusing world.

Dave Hope?! Ok. Apart from: Hope. Pastoral Care. Individuals who have spoken out against injustice. The foundation of our modern day laws. Education. Forgiveness of sins. The Bread of Life. The Scriptures which are arguably among the most inspirational collections of writing in the world and the message of eternal life - what has the church ever given to us? Nothing. And to be blunt - with that kind of track record I don't think it's got much of a future!

When I was a Curate

Again, another Monty Python inspired sketch! This sketch can be performed by three young people as priests, or even funnier by three priests themselves!
It can be used to look at how we see the 'gold old days' and perhaps used to discuss how young people feel they are perceived by others in the church.

Cast: **Three Priests**

The priests are sat around on comfortable chairs, reading books, glossy magazines, listening to music, etc.

Fr A How are you Father?

Fr B Oh, I'm absolutely exhausted, Father! *(Reads Magazine)* How are you?

Fr A Oh, I'm alright, thank you, Father. I've been so busy this week. Rushed off my feet! *(To Father David)* Father, how are you? *(No answer - so shouts slowly)* I said, Father, how are you?!!

Fr C *(With earphones on - which he takes off)* Oh, rushed off my feet, Father. I don't know if I'm coming or going! They've got it so easy these days haven't they?

Fr B Who's that, Father?

Fr C Young People.

Fr A Easy?! Easy! You're telling me! They make all this fuss about being a Christian! We didn't have it easy in our day. Being a Christian then was tough. And the young clergy are the worst. They don't know they're born. If they had to do half of what we had to do!

Fr C Do you know, when I was a curate we had to be up at 6 each day for Morning Prayer, followed by Mass and then a full day's work ending with Compline at 9 in the night.

Fr B Huh, when I was a curate we had to be up at 6 each morning, and the vicar used to submerge us up to the neck in ice-cold water for one hour. Then he'd whip us before Mass with a branch. And all that was before breakfast.

Fr A Breakfast?! When I was a curate, we didn't have breakfast. The vicar would make us work for five days a week on an empty stomach, with nothing but water and a few slices of stale bread. By the end of the week, we were on our knees, starving hungry, rummaging through the bins for a banana skin or a packet of old tea bags.

Fr C Five days a week?! When I was a curate we had to work 15 days a week. I didn't have a day off for 23 years. The only holiday I ever had was sleeping under a tree in Aberdare Park because I had couldn't afford a tent.

Fr B Well, you're lucky you could afford a tree. When I was a curate I had to survive on 12 p a week, half of which I gave to the poor, and the other half I gave to the Vicar for housekeeping.

Fr C Housekeeping?! You're lucky you had a house. When I was a curate I had to sleep in the garden shed, which I shared with a family of 12. For fifteen years I slept on a garden fork, and not once did I complain!

Fr A A Garden Shed? You're lucky you had a garden shed. When I was a curate, I had to sleep in a bin-liner. Every night, after a 29 hour day, three Masses, a hundred and ten Home Communion, Twelve funerals, six hundred baptisms, 18 marriage interviews, and after visiting 110 hospitals, I'd go back home and climb into my garden sack to say Night Prayer. And do you know what? If you tell young people that they won't believe you!