



PORTSMOUTH and WINCHESTER DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION



Collective Worship 4 – 30 September 2011 Matthew 21 33-46 The Parable of the Tenants

All the Collective Worship emails so far can be found on our website

http://portsmouth.anglican.org/what_we_do/education/school_staff/teachers/collective_worship/

The Worship – Major theme ‘IN’, ‘UP’ and ‘OUT’.

This week the Gospel reading for Sunday 2 October 2011 seems to be a tricky story for a primary school audience. I did state that difficult stories should not be avoided so I have written the story in a context that might be in the realm of a child's experience yet remain close to the parable.

If the idea doesn't feel right for you there are several ideas on the Culham Institute website for this time of year. Click here to find them. <http://cowo.culham.ac.uk/thisterm/index.php>

Music on Entry

In an English Country Garden.

Start the worship with a Christian Greeting

e.g. Lighting a Candle and saying “**The Lord be with you.**” “**And also with you.**”

There may be singing

By now the school should have been practicing songs for use in worship. There may be one worth an outing.

When God made the Garden of Creation – Come and Praise

Song for every season – Out of the Ark Music

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The Story – based on the parable of the tenants

A long time ago in a far off land a king planned a beautiful garden.

He wanted the brightest colours, the most beautiful shapes and the tastiest of fruits and vegetables; so he chose very carefully the plants and flowers he would plant.

Because he was a very powerful king – if he wanted a garden like this – that is exactly what he got.

And it was a most beautiful garden with the brightest of colours, the most beautiful of shapes and the strawberries and the raspberries and the tomatoes and the carrots and . . . were all delicious.

BUT

The trouble with a garden is that it needs a lot of care – the seeds need planting in the greenhouse and planting out when they are strong enough. And you can't plant them out without digging the soil and preparing it properly. And the weeds need pulling, the plants need watering, the dead flowers picking off and so on and so on. It's all a lot of work.

AND

The king didn't want to do this.

SO

I know, he thought, I'll get someone else to do it for me. Some gardeners – they can be my tenants. They can do the hard work, I can come along when the strawberries are ripe and the raspberries are ready for picking and the carrots are ready for pulling and I can eat them because it's my garden. And I can look at the beautiful colours and the amazing shapes and see my beautiful garden whenever I want.

BUT

The gardeners, the tenants, would need something in return for their hard work so they were allowed to keep some of the fruit and vegetables for themselves and in any case they could look at the beautiful flowers and shapes all the time.

And so it was.

The tenant gardeners looked after the garden and the plants in the garden grew.

And the fruit ripened and the vegetable fattened.

BUT . . .

Have you ever been a king?

Well it's not easy you know and the king was so busy meeting other kings and doing things that kings do that he couldn't find time to go to the garden to collect the strawberries or the carrots or see the beautiful flowers or the wonderful shapes.

SO . . .

He sent some of his servants to collect his share of the strawberries and the carrots.

BUT

When the tenant gardeners saw the servants coming to collect the fruit and vegetables – can you guess what they did?

They threw stones at them and sent them away.

The tenant gardeners wanted all the fruit and vegetables for themselves. They had forgotten or perhaps wanted to ignore the deal they had with the king.

So the King sent some more servants – more of them and slightly more important ones.

And can you guess what the tenant gardeners did this time?

Well they stoned the servants and they threw so many stones and such large stones that some of the servants were not just hurt but they were killed.

This time the king decided he needed to send someone really important – so he sent his son. The only child he had. He sent his son to the garden to collect the fruit and vegetables that he was owed that the tenant gardeners had agreed they would grow for the king as their part of the deal.

And can you guess what the tenant gardeners did this time?

They still didn't want to give what they owed the king and even when the king sent his son they were not going to change their minds or how they behaved and so you know what they did.

Yes they threw stones at the king's son and they killed him as well.

So I wonder:

- How does the king feel about his garden now?
- How does the king feel about the tenant gardeners?
- Which part of the story did you like the best?
- Which part of the story would you like to leave out?
- What do you think the king will do next?

Jesus told this story but:

- It wasn't a garden it was a vineyard – which is a garden that grows grapes and from grapes you can make wine.
- The king was God
- The servants were prophets and other people like John the Baptist.
- And who do you think was the king's son?

And so – the tricky things for us to think about this week are:

- Who were the tenant gardeners?
- What might this story mean today?

Prayer

Ask the children if one of them would like to try to put into a few words the heart of this story.

Dear God

Thank you for your gifts of creation.

Thank you for your gift of life to all the children and adults of this school.

Thank you that these gifts spread all over the world.

Please help us not to be selfish and share all your gifts with one another.

Help us to know how to be grateful to you.

Amen

Say the Lord's Prayer and prepare the children for the line 'Thy will be done . . . '

Leaving the hall

- Who were the tenant gardeners?
- What might this story mean today?

"The Lord be with you." "And also with you."

Optional evaluation using '4' questions with a small group of children.

1. Tell me one thing you liked about the Collective Worship you have just been in?
 - a. This is a personal idea just about your feelings or thoughts.
2. Tell me one thing that would have made it better for you?
 - a. This is a personal idea just about your feelings or thoughts.
3. Tell me what it was about?
 - a. This is about factual recall.
4. Tell me why did the person leading the worship do what they did? (How you phrase this depends on the age of the pupils)
 - a. So what was the point?
 - b. What do you take away?
 - c. What do we learn about how we live our lives?

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