

**‘ACTING THE BIBLE’  
at  
Beckley School**

**The Resurrection of Jesus  
(Matthew 27-28, Mark 15-16,  
Luke 24, John 20)**

**24 April 2025**

**Joint Benefice of**

**The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley   St. Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover  
St. Barnabas, Horton-cum-Studley   St. John the Baptist, Stanton St. John**

The Four Parishes 'Acting the Bible' team (previously known as 'Open the Book') leads assembly once a fortnight in Beckley School. The team take stories fresh from the pages of the Bible, and make them into mini dramas, to be acted out by themselves, together with Beckley schoolchildren. Through this, it is hoped that the Bible stories are brought alive, and remembered by the children, especially as they too are involved in the acting.

The team is led by Betty Dye, a Licensed Lay Reader, and includes members from Forest Hill, Stanton St John and Beckley. They meet once a fortnight to write the scripts, with the aim of adhering as closely as possible to the original Bible texts. This often involves comparing different Bible translations and even reading the New Testament in the original Greek!

## ACTING THE BIBLE APRIL 2025

### THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS Matthew 27-28, Mark 15-16, Luke 24, John 20

**Cast:** Narrator; Pilate; 2 x Guards (non-speaking pupils); Joseph of Arimathea (pupil); Religious Leaders (up to 5 pupils); Mary Magdalene; Cleopas; Friend (pupil); Jesus

**NARRATOR:** Our story starts immediately after the crucifixion and death of Jesus. In the evening on Good Friday, before the sun had gone down, a rich man from Arimathea went to the Roman governor, Pilate:

*(PILATE enters from the Curtain side with 2 GUARDS and stands in the middle with a GUARD either side. JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA enters from the Chorus side).*

**JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA:** Sir, Jesus of Nazareth who has been crucified today, is dead. I have come to ask for permission to take his body down from the cross and bury him in my own tomb, which is nearby.

**PILATE:** Jesus has died already! Yes, you have my permission to take his body. Guards! Let this man take the body of Jesus off the cross and bury him.

*(JOSEPH returns to the Chorus. PILATE and the GUARDS walk to Curtain side).*

**NARRATOR:** So, the rich man from Arimathea, who was called Joseph, took down the body of Jesus from the cross and laid him in his own tomb, cut out of the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone in front of the entrance.

*(JOSEPH walks forward and mimes rolling the stone in front of the tomb, then returns to the Chorus).*

**NARRATOR:** Then the religious leaders came to see Pilate.

*(PILATE enters from the Curtain side with 2 GUARDS and stands in the middle with a GUARD either side. RELIGIOUS LEADERS step forward to speak from the Chorus).*

**RELIGIOUS LEADER 1:** Sir, we remember what that imposter Jesus said while he was still alive.

**RELIGIOUS LEADER 2:** He said “After 3 days I will rise again!”

**RELIGIOUS LEADER 3:** We want you to order your men to seal the tomb and guard it for three days.

**RELIGIOUS LEADER 4:** Otherwise his followers might steal the body and pretend that he rose from the dead.

**RELIGIOUS LEADER 5:** That would be a worse problem than when he was alive!

**PILATE:** I will give you permission, but you yourselves have some guards. Send **them** to seal the stone and guard the tomb for 3 days.

**RELIGIOUS LEADER (ALL):** Thank you, Sir.

*(RELIGIOUS LEADERS sit down. PILATE walks off Curtain side. GUARDS walk to the imaginary tomb and stand one on either side of it).*

**NARRATOR:** On Saturday, everyone had a day of rest because it was the special festival of Passover. But then, very early in the morning of the third day after Jesus died, something amazing happened!

Suddenly there was *another* great earthquake! An angel came down from heaven, rolled the stone away from the tomb and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. The guards were terrified and fell down as if they were dead.

*(GUARDS fall down, then get up and creep away to sit with Chorus).*

That same Easter morning, just before sunrise, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed.

*(MARY MAGDALENE enters from the Curtain side).*

**MARY MAGDALENE:** *(addressing the audience)* My name is Mary. On Friday I was with Jesus’ mother, and we watched while some of Jesus’ friends took his dead body and put it into a tomb in the rock which belongs to Joseph of Arimathea. Then we went home and waited because it was nearly Saturday when no-one is allowed to do any work.

But now it is Sunday and look – the sun is just rising. I came as soon as I could to see this tomb where Jesus' body had been put, but the strangest thing has happened! The huge stone that was in front of it has been rolled away. I've just been inside and the tomb is empty! Someone must have stolen his body! *(weeping)*

*(JESUS walks on from the Curtain side).*

**JESUS:** Lady, why are you weeping?

**MARY MAGDALENE:** They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.

**JESUS:** Tell me, who are you looking for?

**MARY MAGDALENE:** Sir, are you the gardener? If you have carried him away, please tell me where he is so that I can go to him.

**JESUS:** Mary!

**MARY MAGDALENE:** Jesus, Lord, it's you! You're alive! *(goes to grab hold of him)*

**JESUS:** Don't hold on to me now, Mary, because I haven't returned to my Father in heaven yet. But go and tell the disciples that I am going ahead of them to Galilee and will meet them there.

*(MARY walks off Curtain side. JESUS follows slowly).*

**NARRATOR:** Mary went back and told the disciples that she had seen the risen Jesus. Peter and another disciple ran to the tomb and saw for themselves that the stone had been rolled away and it was empty. But not everyone believed her story straight away.

*(CLEOPAS and FRIEND walk in from Chorus side, then stand in the centre).*

**CLEOPAS:** It is so hard to believe that Jesus of Nazareth is dead. He was such a wonderful prophet, and we thought he was the special Messiah!

**FRIEND:** I know, Cleopas! And now it's Sunday, and the 7 miles from Jerusalem to our home in Emmaus feels like a very long walk.

**CLEOPAS:** Have you heard Mary Magdalene's story that she has seen him alive? I don't know what to think of it!

*(JESUS walk in from Curtain side and catch up with CLEOPAS in the centre).*

**JESUS:** What are you two talking about as you walk along?

**FRIEND:** We were talking about the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. Haven't you heard about it?

**CLEOPAS:** Some of the women we know are saying he has risen from the dead and that they have seen him!

**Jesus:** Why are you so surprised? Don't you know that it has been prophesied in many places in the scriptures that the coming Messiah would have to suffer and die for the sins of the world before entering into his glory? Let me explain to you all the scriptures that speak about it.

*(All 3 walk up and down in the stage area).*

**CLEOPAS:** Well, listening to you has been absolutely amazing! Now that we have arrived home, will you come in and share some bread and wine with us?

*(All 3 stop at one end of the stage and stand together facing the children).*

**JESUS:** Before we eat let us say the blessing: *Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Sovereign of all, who brings forth bread and wine from the earth.*

**CLEOPAS:** Oh! Jesus, it's you! You are alive! You have risen from the dead!

**NARRATOR:** As soon as they recognised Jesus, he vanished from their sight. In their excitement, Cleopas and his friend went straight back to Jerusalem to explain to the disciples what Jesus had told them, how the Messiah had to suffer and die for the world, and to share the good news that he had risen from the dead. When they got there, they found that the disciples were incredibly excited because Jesus had shown himself alive to them too!