



8. Heroes of Hope – Everything could be a prayer



Age range: Primary

Theme: We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community, serving the needs of our unique school contexts. We continue this term's theme of **'Shine Like Stars!'** with a short series based on the new publication **'Heroes of Hope'** (which we hope all of our Church schools have a copy of, courtesy of the Church of England). Like Daniel, the 22 'heroes' in this book lived in challenging times, and demonstrated in *their* actions how to 'shine like stars', standing up for what is right and good in a world that often didn't reflect this. In our world today, we want to inspire resilience in our pupils to be confident in who they are and what they stand for, just like these heroes, and to be positive role models in your school community, even when it might be difficult. **This week, we introduce another story from the Heroes of Hope book: the story of St. Martin de Porres who we quote in the title of this week's resources. We also link to some words of Jesus from Matthew 25 using a very short reflective story/reading. Please also see the highlighted sections (below) this week, for an important national initiative that your school might participate in, helping your pupils act on some words we share in this week's materials.**



How does this link to your school's Christian vision & values?

This week, we create an opportunity to reflect on the very practical examples that St. Martin gave of how to live; that every action could be a prayer if the intention is right. This theological idea is at the very heart of compassionate service, as expressed by Jesus throughout the Gospels.

Resources:

- **NB The 'Heroes of Hope' book that we refer to is available for free for all Church schools: for those schools in the Diocese of Guildford who have not collected their copy, please contact jane.whittington@cofeguildford.org.uk or come into Church House and we will be very happy to give you your copy. Additional copies are available from SPCK: [Heroes of Hope - Sharon Prentis | Alysia-Lara Ayonrinde - SPCK Publishing](#) We are very grateful to the illustrators (Daniela Gamba, Neda Kazemifar, Anastasia Magloire Williams and Jen Khatun) and to SPCK for granting us permission to use some of the illustrations from the book for these resources. Please respect the artists' rights and do not share these images other than within these collective worship resources.**
- **Please remember that the resources that we provide should be adapted where needed, to suit the context of your own school and your own pupils.**
- This term, in addition to our usual gathering and sending slides, we are including a slide at the very start to help to 'still' pupils, and help them to enter into the 'sacred' space of collective worship, ready to think, reflect, talk or pray. You might also want to use this in your class to change the 'mood' for any class-based worship. Take this at whatever pace seems necessary for your pupils. It ends with a visual 'timetable', setting out some of the elements that will be included in our time together, which we hope may help some pupils. You can also find these as cards to print out to use in other collective worship if this helps you.
- As always, there are also some ideas for **reflective activities / ideas** to ponder for use in your reflective areas for this term, listed at the end of the script along with a handy wall chart to print each week for your reflective area. You can find all these as a separate file in our resources area, which may make it easier for teachers to print and use in their classrooms.
- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation.
- **You will need.... some simple props to help with the reflective reading/story (see p. 4 for list & script)** which is taken from Jesus' words in Matthew 25. It would be far more effective for pupils if it was told live, but if this isn't possible, there is a video version here: <https://youtu.be/DpChhrPjFcY>. You will also need some paper to make either paper chains or 'people chains', or a chain of hearts for the reflective activity. You can see how in this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPU1VxqFlfM>
- **Reflective prayer activity:** the 40 ideas for families wallchart would provide plenty of material to create some action cards for your class. Find the master copy here: [A3 40acts Family Wallchart.pdf](#) We have started you off with some suggestions and some blank cards on p.6-7
- **Could counting plastic be one small act that we do to help our world, with the poorest communities often feeling the greatest impact of climate change – and put pressure on governments to take plastic pollution seriously? This week, at the end of our script, we highlight an initiative designed to do this, and involve schools and/or households to take part in the Big Plastic Count, for just one week from 9th to 15th March. More details here: [Home | The Big Plastic Count](#) and sign-up here: [Sign up | The Big Plastic Count](#)**

Gathering:

Slide 1: Rising hearts stilling exercise



Shine like stars!

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Use the stilling slide if desired: the suggested words should be spoken slowly, leaving pauses inbetween to create a sense of stillness.

As you sit quietly, watch the hearts rising....[PAUSE]

Now practise slower breathing.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....keep this going as you continue to look at the hearts....[PAUSE]

You maybe notice that you are feeling calmer and more relaxed....[PAUSE]

As you breathe, think back to the ideas about love that we shared last week..... [PAUSE]

We come into this special / sacred space and time to be still....to think deeply.....to be together as a school community.....

In our time together today, we will **play a game together, share a story and then use it to help us to think, reflect and pray.**

But first, let's welcome one another as we begin....

Slide 2:

Leader: As we gather together today....

ALL:we bring our thoughts and our hearts into this sacred space.

Here are BSL actions for some of the words:

Leader's words:

Gather: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/gather> (1st video); Today: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/today> (1st video)

Pupils' response:

Thoughts: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/thoughts> (1st video); Hearts: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/heart> (1st video)

Engaging:

Slide 3: In a while, we will be hearing another story of one of our heroes of hope, and how their actions shone like stars....

Slide 4: Charades (cards on p5)

Some of you might have played charades with other people, where one of you acts out (without speaking) a word or phrase for other people to guess. We're going to do this now, with some very simple, everyday actions.... *[you might need to demonstrate with younger pupils, using the 'cleaning teeth' image on screen; then select a volunteer and ask them to choose a card. Whisper a few ideas of what they could do if they're not sure – or ask their class teacher to help...]*

[Suggested examples: Washing hands – brushing or combing your hair – having a shower – putting on your shoes – eating your breakfast – reading a book – stroking a pet – drinking from a bottle of water – mopping the floor]

Many of these simple actions form a part of our everyday routines – most of us do them without even thinking!

Slide 5: Last week, we thought about what 'love is...', and how St. Monica showed this through her relationship with Augustine, her son. For a few moments before we hear the next story, just bring into your mind some of the things that we talked about, or what you wrote or drew into the hearts in your classroom reflective areas.....*[leave a pause]*

So, as we move into our story for today, be listening out for some more small, everyday actions – and (more importantly) the difference that they can make.....

Slide 6: Our story for today comes from about 400 years ago, around the time that William Shakespeare was writing his plays, and **Queen Elizabeth I** was on the throne....

This is **St. Martin de Porres**, who was born into a poor family in Lima in Peru in South America.*[map on next slide]*

Slide 7: World Map If you think you might have heard of that place before, Lima is the fictional home of **Paddington Bear!** (Another story, for another day....!)

Slide 8: As a young man, Martin joined the Dominican Order, wanting to use his deep Christian faith to help others, especially those who were the poorest in society. Nothing was too small a task for him and people and animals alike were cared for with the deepest compassion. It was said that he had a special



understanding of animals and would treat all living things with such care and respect. You can often see animals with him in pictures.

Slide 9: When a really serious illness spread across Lima, people were so worried that they would catch it that no-one would take care of those who were sick – except for Martin, who used his skills with herbs to make medicine to make people feel better. Despite what others said, he would often offer his bed to those who were sick or injured, and take care of them himself. Thanks to his care, many people who might have been left to die were healed. He also set up a special home for children who had no parents so that they could be looked after, and after he died in 1639, he became known as ‘Martin of Charity’, recognising his life of service to others. Before we move on, let’s just pause and think quietly for a few moments about what we have heard.....and about what we might take from this story into our hearts. *[PAUSE....]*

Slide 10: Before we reflect on some words spoken by St. Martin, we are going to hear some words spoken by Jesus, about how important it is to care for others, and make sure that they have what they need, especially those who might get overlooked in our world. As you listen, think about the connections with the life of St. Martin..... *[use the script and objects on p.4, or video linked from the picture. Afterwards, talk together about the links with St. Martin de Porres’ life.]*

Slide 11: Responding and words for worship

We’ve heard today about the life of St. Martin de Porres and how he cared for others. Let’s hear some of his own words as we draw our time together to a close. **“Everything, even sweeping, scraping vegetables, weeding a garden and waiting on the sick could be a prayer, if it were offered to God.”** *[read them twice to allow them to sink in]*

....I wonder what you think of Martin’s idea?....

....I wonder how these words might help us to understand why Martin lived as he did?.....

....I wonder how these simple actions might be like a prayer – and ‘shine like stars’?....

....I wonder how our actions might help others or be offered like prayers?....

As I leave a few moments of quiet, you might want to think about some actions that you might do for others.....

I’m going to use St. Martin’s idea as we pray now. If you would like to make this prayer yours, and ask God to help *your* actions to make a difference, then you can join in with these words....

Slide 12: May our actions be like a prayer....

So, I invite you to pray with me if you’d like to.

Slide 13: When others need a helping hand....

Slide 14: May our actions be like a prayer....

Slide 15: When someone is hurting.....

Slide 16: May our actions be like a prayer....

Slide 17: Wherever help is needed.....

Slide 18: May our actions be like a prayer....

Slide 19: Amen.

Slide 20: The Big Plastic Count *[optional slide] *You will need to decide how you are engaging with this initiative and add any additional text to suit your school’s context and level of engagement. You might also want to re-use this slide at the start of next week as a reminder.*

We’ve heard today how St. Martin de Porres believed that every small act could be like a prayer – and make a difference in the world. We think so too, and so next week, 9th-15th March, we are inviting you to take



Shine like stars!

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part in the Big Plastic Count in school / at home*. The results will be shared with important people in the Government to try to persuade them to take plastic pollution seriously – and make a difference for our world, and for millions of people from the poorest communities who feel the impact of climate change the most.

Sending: Slide 21

Leader: As we leave this place & time and go into the day ahead...

All: May we shine like stars!



Pupils' response:

Shine: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/shine> (4th video); Stars: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/stars> (4th video)

To listen to / sing:

[Being a friend](#) (BBC)

To listen to: God of Justice by Tim Hughes: [God of Justice by Tim Hughes \(Lyric\) \(youtube.com\)](#)

Slide 22: Reflective areas



Print off the cards from the link:

Do: Take a card and read the words. You could choose a new one every day!

Talk: What is it asking you to do?

Think: Think about how you might do what's on the card this week, and who to.

We also encourage you to explore the full story of St. Martin from the book during the week.

When I was..... (based on Matthew 25: 35-40)

Gather the objects listed below to use this reflective reading together.

You will need:

a plate & some food [real or role play]; a glass of water; a chain of paper people (which you can re-use in the reflection!); some dolls' clothes (or a small item of clothing such as gloves); a 'thermometer' from a role play first aid kit; a large bunch of keys.

People were always asking Jesus, 'What's important in God's kingdom?' so Jesus spoke these words:

I was hungry	[lay plate of food]	You shared your food
I was thirsty	[lay glass of water]	You gave me a drink
I was alone	[lay people 'chain']	You kept me company
I had no clothes	[lay item of clothing]	You gave me something to wear
I was ill	[lay thermometer]	You looked after me
I was in prison	[lay keys]	You visited me

Whenever you helped someone in need you helped me.

The people who do these things are the people of God's kingdom.



Shine like stars!

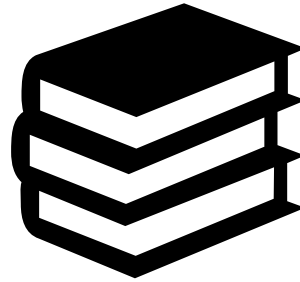
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Print these onto card and trim for the charades game



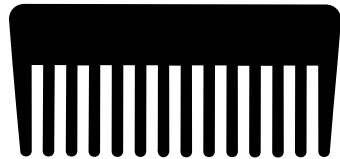
washing your hands



reading a book



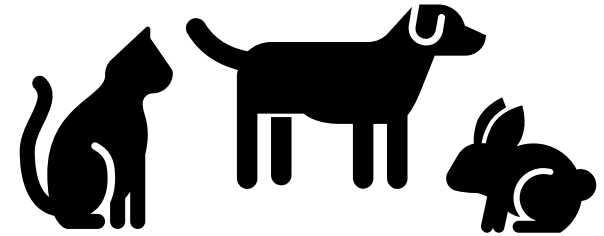
drinking from a water bottle



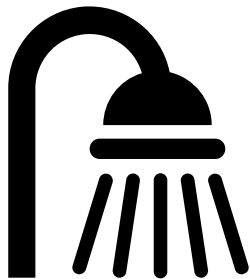
combing or brushing
your hair



putting on your shoes



stroking a pet



having a shower



eating breakfast



mopping the floor



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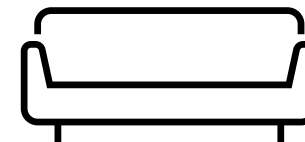
Print these cards for your reflection area: you will need to fill the spaces with your own ideas from the [40 Acts Family Wallchart](#)



Trace your hand on paper and write in it five ways you could help someone this week



Make small encouragement cards with kind words or Bible verses and hide them for people to find



Share a snack, seat or game with someone today.



Help tidy up your cloakroom, playground or neighbourhood (on your way home).



Think of someone who might need help and offer it without being asked



List all the ways your hands can be kind - see if you can list 20 (or more)! Choose 3 of them to do today.



Look for as many opportunities as possible to show people you love them without saying the words today.



Let someone else take the spotlight today. Give them a turn to speak, choose or share.



During lunchtime today, really listen to one another as you chat.



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Small acts.....



**Take a card and read the words.
You could choose a new one
every day!**



What is it asking you to do?



**Think about how you might do
what's on the card this week, and
who to.**

