



A School Act of Collective Worship

Week 2: Children and young people who have suffered trauma

This is one of five outlines for Collective Worship written to help schools and churches pray, offer love and hope and encourage giving towards The Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call 2025. The Lent Call supports our brothers and sisters in Christ here in our own diocese and in our link dioceses in Zimbabwe and The Diocese of Jerusalem as well as the Middle East.

Bible passage: Matthew 19.14

Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.'

Gather with a song

[It Is Well With My Soul](#). Songs of Praise from Eastbourne Bandstand.

Engage

Ask the pupils if they have ever felt like they did not count or matter? Have they ever felt ignored or overlooked? Share some examples.

Why did these situations make them feel ignored or overlooked?

Have they ever felt that they were not important because they were a child or young person? Share examples.

Why did these situations make them feel that they were not important?

Share that there was a time in the Bible when children were seen as not important by adults.

Read to pupils the Lent Call Bible passage including the verses before and after to put it into context, (Matthew 19:13-15).

Discuss what the disciples said and what Jesus replied. How might the different people involved in this incident with Jesus have felt?

What do Jesus' words and actions teach people about children? ...about God?

Which other people are often overlooked in our society and world? How does Jesus' teaching apply for them?

Jesus is showing how precious all people are to God, including children. Christians believe all people equally have a place with God and that starts with those who are vulnerable and often marginalised in society and the world. Whereas they may be excluded by some people, they are included by God.



Jesus blesses the little children, by Jan van 't Hoff, Gospelimages.com



The people who had brought the children to Jesus did so in faith because they wanted him to lay hands on them and pray for them. Jesus did this after telling his disciples to let the children come to him.

For Christians, prayer is very important, it is a way of communicating with God. People pray at all different times, for different things, in all sorts of ways. People often pray when they are in need of help from God, maybe when they are experiencing or have faced trauma and are feeling traumatised. This can be from shocking and extremely upsetting events that have happened to them in their lives, personally or as part of a group or country. They are hurt and affected significantly. The Bible teaches that God is always present with people and will help them through all the challenges of life.

Read and display the 'Footprints in the Sand' poem, available online. Give the chance for people to reflect on the words in this poem. Draw out the link with prayer and God's supporting presence.

Respond with a prayer

O God of all justice and peace, we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear and other hurt which some children and young people in the world suffer.

Be with those who need you in their time of suffering, holding them in your loving care.

Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children, for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Adapted from a Prayer for peace written by The Very Revd Canon Richard Swell, Dean of St George's College Jerusalem.

A reflection for schools and churches

- Q:** What does Jesus' teachings teach us about how to treat each person?
- Q:** What helps you when you are facing difficult and upsetting times in your life?
- Q:** Who has 'carried you' in times of difficulty?
- Q:** What is your prayer or thought for children and young people who are coping with trauma?
- Q:** What can we learn from Jesus about the kingdom of God?

