



A School Act of Collective Worship

Week 3: Children and young people who have suffered trauma – the Diocese of Zimbabwe

This is the third of five outlines for Collective Worship written to help schools pray, reflect and be encouraged that God created, loves and values all children. The passage is Matthew 19.14.

The thoughts, questions and reflections found in these Collective Worship will lead us to look beyond ourselves. We will find out about those who are in need locally as well as in Israel, Palestine and Zimbabwe. This will help us understand why it is good to pray for and give to the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call 2025.

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.'

Song

[Zim Top Praise & Worship Songs Playlist 2022.](#)

(Please be aware of adverts.)

Gather

Play the medley of Christian worship songs from Zimbabwe.

Engage

As you were entering this collective worship, we were listening to music written to praise God. Some of the songs were in a different language to English. Would anyone like to guess which country it comes from? *Take some suggestions. You may want to say whether the pupils are 'hot' or 'cold' as to how geographically close they are.*

Zimbabwe is a beautiful country full of life, resources and hope. Yet, life is very difficult for lots of people. Where is Zimbabwe? (*Find a map and show where it is*). In Zimbabwe, some children have a really tough time. Some children don't have parents to take care of them, and this makes life difficult. This is trauma. For our first collective worship in this series, we learnt that trauma is an event that causes a person to see life very differently. We also learnt that Jesus wants to heal people of trauma and uses people to do this through charity and kind work. Some of these children are looked after



Bishop Christopher addresses young pupils at the Bonda Mission in the Diocese of Manicaland.

by family members, while others live in special homes called orphanages. Orphanages at Mission Stations, like the one in Daramombe (*find Daramombe on the map*), help by giving children a safe place to live, as well as medical care and education.

While Mission Stations do their best to provide a home, they don't always have enough money to give children the special care they need. Many of the grown-ups looking after them, including people from local churches, might not know how to help children who have been through really hard times.

This is why the charity Anglican Council of Churches in Zimbabwe wants to do more. They hope to provide extra support to help orphaned children feel safe, loved, and start to heal – whether they live in orphanages, with the Mothers' Union, or with relatives.

Respond

Let's hear about two children from Zimbabwe. First, is one boy's story – Simon. *You may ask a pupil to read this out.*



When Simon's mum was living in a village in Zimbabwe, she was staying with her own mum because her parents had separated. Simon's mum had some learning difficulties, and when Simon was born, he went to live in an orphanage. Sadly, when Simon was still very little, his mum died, but no one told him.

Simon's family didn't know where he was – they even thought he had died because they lost touch with him. Growing up in the orphanage was tough for Simon. He started to feel very upset and began acting badly. He tried smoking and doing other things, even though he was still very young. The nuns who took care of him noticed that he couldn't stop, and they realised he needed more help.

Simon was then moved to a special place called Mutare Probation Services. There, people tried to help him make better choices and manage his feelings and addictions. But Simon and the grown-ups who cared for him sometimes blamed each other for the struggles he faced. This was a hard situation for everyone. Having someone to talk to, like a counsellor or therapist, might have helped Simon understand his feelings and find a better path forward.

Now, Simon is 43 years old. He still finds it hard to take care of himself and overcome his struggles. With the right support, there is still hope for Simon to heal and find a better future.

Now let's hear Elizabeth's story.

You may ask a pupil to read this out.

When Elizabeth was a tiny baby, her mother left her alone in the wild. Luckily, someone found her and took her to the police, who made sure she was safe. Elizabeth was then taken to an orphanage, where nuns and caregivers looked after her until she grew up. Although she felt cared for, life in the orphanage wasn't always easy for everyone.

Elizabeth stayed strong, but some of the other children found things much harder. Difficult experiences left some children feeling really sad and hurt inside.

With the right support and love, children like Elizabeth and Simon can begin to feel better and start to heal. These are just two of the many

stories of orphaned children in Zimbabwe. The Anglican Council of Churches in Zimbabwe wants to offer help to heal minds to orphaned children and those who work with them during their time of need. In this time of Lent, when Christians reflect, think and pray, we remember people who are being like Jesus to others.

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.' Jesus welcomes Elizabeth and Simon. He wants organisations like the Anglican Council of Churches in Zimbabwe to support and care for children. The Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call is raising money this Lent for the work of this organisation.

Prayer

Loving God,
during this time of Lent, we bring before you Simon, Elizabeth, and all orphaned children in Zimbabwe who face hardship. Thank you for those who cared for them when life was difficult.

We ask for healing and hope for Simon, that he may find strength and a better future.
Surround Elizabeth and others like her with love and support.

Guide organisations like the Anglican Council of Churches in Zimbabwe as they provide care and counselling to children in need.

Help us to follow Jesus' example, welcoming every child with open arms and showing your love.

Amen.

A reflection

Q: What do you remember about Simon's story? What happened to Elizabeth when she was a baby?

Q: What did Jesus mean when he said, "Let the little children come to me"?

Q: How did the nuns and caregivers act like Jesus?

Q: Can you think of ways to help children who might be going through a tough time?

