



## 'On the Hour, every hour' - Suitable for Key Stage 2

To introduce the Acts of the Apostles and reflect on the belief that ordinary as well as extraordinary people are called to do God's work. *by Kate Fleming* on

[www.Assemblies.org.uk](http://www.Assemblies.org.uk)

### Aims

To introduce the Acts of the Apostles and reflect on the belief that ordinary as well as extraordinary people are called to do God's work.

### Preparation and Materials

- Children need (a) information about Prague, (b) specific information about the Town Hall Clock in the Old Town Square in Prague.
- Prepare the story below.

### Assembly

Introduce and tell the following story:

Today I am going to tell you a story about a cameraman called Martin, who travelled the world making television programmes for the BBC. He was part of an outside broadcast team. They packed their equipment and their essential needs, boarded the plane, did the job and came home. Routine stuff for Martin, indeed it was how he earned his living. Last week Spain, next week South Africa, this week Prague. Funny, he thought, I've never been to Prague. Where's Prague? Ah yes, the Czech Republic. Task in hand: to film the Old Town Square and one of its main attractions, the Town Hall Clock.

It was cold when the team arrived in the square, and Martin's fingers soon became numb. The cold wind penetrated his anorak and bit into his exposed neck. Delicate, frail snowflakes began to fall.

Coming up to 9 o'clock, freezing cold, beginning to snow. Why oh why, thought Martin, are there so many people here, just to see 12 clockwork followers of Jesus move round the tower. The little blue windows in the tower popped open and the 11 apostles (explain - Jesus' first disciples), plus St Paul, chugged round on their clockwork table. A cock crowed, and the clock chimed nine. The crowd caught its breath and a warm murmur of approval rippled through the cold air.



'Martin, I want you to focus on the crowd,' whispered Louise, the director, into Martin's ear. 'Pick out interesting faces, young, old, ugly, beautiful, sad, happy. You know what to do.' 'But everyone has gone,' reflected Martin. 'They'll be back, mate,' said Joe, the floor manager. 'At 10 o'clock. On the hour, every hour. Let's go and get a cup of tea and warm up.'

In the warmth of the café, nursing a cup of tea in his cold hands, Martin thought about the people in the crowd. The clockwork figures of the first followers of Jesus, who emerged on the hour, every hour, from the blue windows in the Town Hall tower, reminded the watching crowds that these men had been called by Jesus to spread his word and to do his work. Martin wondered if people were still called to do the work of Jesus. Not extraordinary people like priests, nuns and Mother Teresa, but ordinary people standing in the Old Town Square, on the hour, every hour. He would, as instructed, focus his camera on the people and search for Apostles 2001. But how would he know who were apostles and who weren't?

Five minutes to 10 o'clock. Martin focused his camera on the people gazing up at the blue windows, anticipating, pumping hot breath into the cold air. The snow began to blur his vision.

An old man wiping away cold tears from his eyes. A young girl, her face encircled by a fur hood, full of hope and kindness. The tired, worn face of a mother cradling a baby in her arms.

All watching and waiting.

'Martin, good faces all of them. Time is of the essence now. Go back to the old man. Get closer.' Martin focused tightly on the old man's face and for just a split second he seemed to see the old man kneeling in prayer. 'Now to that young girl,' said the director. Martin panned across to the fur hood to find, fleetingly, a nurse leaning over a bed.

'Martin, can you find that mother? I want the baby!' Years of experience drove his camera to reveal the sleeping face of the baby. At that precise moment the baby opened its eyes and gazed up at the clockwork apostles, who returned its gaze from their lofty position. It was as if the baby knew that something special had happened. The cock crowed, the clock chimed ten, the crowd dispersed.

'Well done, Martin. Some excellent stuff as always. Let's get out of here before the airport is snowbound.' Martin packed up his camera with his usual professional care. Had the snow distorted his vision, he wondered? Or had he seen deeper than his camera?



What do you think?

### **Time for reflection**

Dear God,

We give thanks for the courage and belief of the first disciples of Jesus.

Help us to realize the many ways in which we can become Apostles too.

**Amen.**

### **Song / Music**

'When I needed a neighbour' (*Come and Praise*, 65)

### **Curriculum Links**

English, PSE, History