



# Lenten Encounters

Brief Monologs For Worship

By Lynelle Mason

COMMUNICATIVE  
CREATIVE  
SAMPLES

# Lenten Encounters

## Index

About Lenten Encounters .....4-5

### Power Brokers

Annas .....6-9

Caiaphas ..... 10-12

Pilate ..... 13-15

Herod Antipas ..... 16-19

### Class By Themselves

Judas ..... 20-23

Barabbas ..... 24-25

### The Spice Bearers

Mary of Bethany ..... 26-29

Mary Magdalene ..... 30-34

Mary, the Mother of Jesus ..... 35-37

### Disciples

John ..... 38-43

Simon Peter ..... 44-47

John Mark ..... 48-50

Thomas ..... 51-53

Cleopas ..... 54-57

Lazarus ..... 58-61

Thief on the Cross ..... 62-64

### Bystanders

Wife of Pilate ..... 65-67

Simon of Cyrene ..... 68-70

### Roman Reactions

Centurion ..... 71-73

Tomb Guard ..... 74-76

The Flogger ..... 77-79

The Gambler ..... 80-82

### Sanhedrin Sympathizers

Joseph of Arimathea ..... 83-86

Nicodemus ..... 87-90

By Lynelle Mason. Art by Sally Beck. © 2010 by Creative Communications for the Parish, 1564 Fencorp Dr., Fenton, MO 63026.  
1-800-325-9414. creativecommunications.com. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.

# Lenten Encounters

## About *Lenten Encounters*

Centuries-old biblical characters, in these twenty-four monologs, spring to life to enhance our Lenten journey. They fall within the following groups: Power Brokers, Class By Themselves, The Spice Bearers, Disciples, Bystanders, Roman Reactions, and Sanhedrin Sympathizers. Each monolog comes with a Scripture reference, prayer thought, and song suggestions.

The monologs are simple yet profound and adaptable for presentation before Sunday school classes, youth groups, and church worship services in a variety of settings. Perfect for use in worship throughout the season ... or even in Bible Studies, Youth Groups, or for Children's Church ... these brief monologs bring Biblical characters to life.

## Costuming

Keep it simple: basic tunics and shoulder wrap-arounds for most speakers, a crown for Herod, a laurel wreath for Pilate.

## Staging

To the side of the presentation area, have a cross, spotlighted. Speaking characters share their monolog from a lectern. It is not necessary for the monolog to be memorized.

# Speaker Notes

Depict age by body movements: especially Annas or other who might be interpreted as being elderly. Be familiar enough with your monolog that you become that person in speech and mannerisms.

## About *Lynelle Mason*

Lynelle Mason is a retired elementary teacher who has published twenty-two articles and received eleven awards. A life member of the Southeastern Writers' Association and holding membership in the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and the Midsouth Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, she has also completed two courses from the Institute of Children's Literature.

Her pastor husband (now deceased) and she have served in churches large and small over many decades. Lynelle is currently a Stephen Minister, a shepherd for K-1<sup>st</sup> graders in church school, and is on the Staff Care Committee. Along with her therapy dog, Ms. Cleo, she makes weekly visits to a nursing facility. She enjoys reading, international traveling, photography, water aerobics, and Scrabble.

## CD-Rom

A CD-Rom is included with this book. It contains the contents of the book in PDF form (for reprinting) and text files for the monologs (for revising, if you wish). Purchase of this book grants copyright for your worshipping community.

# Lenten Encounters

## Power Brokers

—Annas—

### John 18:13-14, 19-23

*First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.*

*Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?"*

# Annas

My name is Annas and all the religious, economic, and political clout of Israel rests with my family. Although I'm the ex-high priest I'm probably more powerful than my son-in-law Caiaphas, the current High Priest. I was appointed by the Romans and, likewise, was my son. What does this mean? It tells you we got where we are by toeing the line with the Romans. It also lets you know that when a person angers the high priest he'd better watch out. Our ability to do a person in is powerful!

For three years we've had a watchful eye on a young upstart from Galilee named Jesus. I'd spent months getting all my booths lined up for the celebration of Passover. I had a booth where people could buy their animal sacrifices. This included lambs, pigeons, and doves. Another booth was set up to exchange foreign coins into Jewish coins. With well over 200 million people visiting the Temple that translated into selling around 250,000 lambs. The men who manned my booths weren't businessmen but expert extortionists. The Bazaars of Annas is our biggest money making effort of the year.

It may strike you as odd these booths were operating in one of the courts of the Temple. They were located in the Court of the Gentiles, a place considered unclean by most Jews. I'm told it was a place where, long before my time, people from all nations could come, feel welcomed, and pray. Most people, except Jesus, had forgotten about that bit of information.

During Passover people traveling long distances and from other countries came in droves. We enabled them to obtain their animals for temple rituals and to exchange their foreign coins for a Jewish half shekel, the tax required in temple worship. I call it a convenience measure.

Did we make money from these booths? Of course we did. We had control of the market. You had to have the right coin and your sacrifice had to be perfect. Suppose you tried to enter with your own doves. Outside the Temple you could buy a set of doves for 4 pence. In the Bazaars of Annas you'd pay 75 pence. My inspectors could always find something unacceptable about your offering. You'd wind up buying one of our lambs at twice the price of the regular market. The same was true of our money-exchange booths.

We were hoping Jesus wouldn't show this year. He did! Everywhere Jesus went he was followed by a mass of people. Furthermore he took more than a verbal attack on my bazaars!

One day he pushed and shoved his way until he was smack dab in the middle of the booth that sold animals. He brandished a whip and shouted to the booth owners, "Get out of here, you money-making scoundrels! This court is a house of prayer for all people and you've made it a den of thieves!"

Doves and pigeons took to the air, baaing sheep raced to escape, and the booth hucksters ducked to avoid the cracking whip. Jesus wasn't through. He moved in on the money changers tossing their tables upside down. Clanging coins spilled and rolled hither and yon. Patrons were grabbing to retrieve them.

When the report reached me I became so angry I was on the verge of a stroke.

"How dare he attack my bazaars! We're in control here, not him."

"Take it easy," said Caiaphas. "We're collaborating with one of his disciples and should have him in custody soon."



It was a little past midnight on Thursday when there was a knock on my door. Standing before me was a burly Temple guard and a prisoner with his arms bound and tied. “Sir,” said the soldier, “this is Jesus, and we wanted you to be the first to know he’s our prisoner.”

“Tell me, Jesus, about your disciples and your teachings.”

“You shouldn’t be asking me questions. Ask those who have heard me.”

The guard slapped Jesus across the face and warned, “Are you trying to teach the high priest how to conduct a trial?”

Jesus said, “If I’ve said anything illegal, witnesses should be called. I’ve only stated the law. Why hit me for that?”

Laws? Rules? Who cares? The only thing that’s going to satisfy me is to have Jesus killed and the sooner, the better.

## Prayer Thought

*Are you, like Jesus, passionate about God and yearn to be in his presence? What corners of compromise need to be cleaned out in your life? What tables of temptation need to be overturned?*

## Suggested Music

*Search Me, O God*

# Lenten Encounters

Power Brokers

—Caiaphas—

Mark 14:53, 55-65

*They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus said, "I am; and 'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'" Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?" All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophesy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.*

# Caiaphas

I am Caiaphas. I was the high priest of Israel during the time Jesus lived and had the honor of presiding over the meeting that condemned him to death.

You'd be interested in knowing I was handpicked by Rome for my job and normally worked very closely with Pontius Pilate. Actually I was part of a family dynasty. My father-in-law Annas, had been the high priest before I took over. I presided over a group known as the Sanhedrin. We were the sacred keepers of Jewish law and laid down its rules and regulations. Above all else we were to keep our people in line and make sure no insurrection against Rome ever happened. That's precisely why I had my scouts constantly dogging the steps of Jesus and his followers.

One time I sent an elite group of guards to spy on Jesus, expecting them to bring me back a prisoner. Instead they came back lamenting, "Never did any man speak like this man!"

When Jesus supposedly brought Lazarus back to life, I was alarmed. It was reported that important citizens were aligning themselves with him.

I told one of my priests, "We've got to put an end to Jesus and Lazarus! I smell an insurrection of mammoth proportions."

"Do you want us to seize him while he's teaching?" the priests asked.

"No, that would make him seem like a martyr. We had best wait until Passover is over."

"Sir," said the priest. I hear Judas, one of his 12 disciples, isn't as happy as he once was."

I jumped up from my throne seat. "That's it! Go to work on Judas! Pay him whatever you must."

You know by now Judas became Jesus' Achilles heel.

After midnight Thursday but way before daylight, there was a knock on my door.

I opened the door and in walked a group of roughshod soldiers and Jesus. I went through the pretense of making it look legal. We called for witnesses and to be quite frank they made fools of themselves. None of them could agree.

I took matters in my own hands. I know that legally I'm not allowed to put a person who is on trial in a defensive position. Nevertheless, I wanted Jesus on a cross and the quicker the better. I looked Jesus square in the eyes and said, "Are you the son of God, yes or no?"

"I am," he said.

"Trial's over!" I shouted as I tore my outer tunic into shreds. "He calls himself the Son of God! That's blasphemy pure and simple. Case dismissed. Let's move on to Pilate's court.

## Prayer Thought

*Truth-telling is the road that enables one to live with his or her head held high. Sometimes life doesn't offer us a lot of choices. When our faith requires a yes or no reply, may we, like Jesus, tell the truth even if the results may harm us.*

## Suggested Music

*Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley*