

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

**ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL VERSION BY DR JAMES ALLAN FRANCIS
(1864–1928)**

The following adaptation has been included in this section as either a starting point for discussion, or to complement some of the material in the questionnaire. In the context of performing a nativity musical, it may prove helpful to give children the opportunity to think about the impact of Jesus' unusual life, as well as his unusual birth.

A child was born in an unimportant village. He grew up in another obscure village. He worked as a carpenter until he was thirty years old and then he spent three years travelling around as a preacher. He told people an important message and demonstrated it too.

He never wrote a book. He never had a family of his own. He never owned a home. He didn't go to college or university. He never travelled further than 200 miles from where he was born. He never ran an army. And yet huge numbers of people followed him.

While he was still a young man he became very unpopular. One of his friends denied him, another one betrayed him. Many ran away. He was turned over to his enemies and sentenced to the cruellest form of death. He was nailed to a cross, between two thieves and after he was dead they placed him in a borrowed grave.

But three days later this man rose from the dead – living proof that he was, as he had said, the Saviour whom God had sent, the incarnate son of God.

Two thousand years later and this man is still the central figure of the human race. On our calendars his birth divides history into two halves (BC and AC). One day of every week is set aside in remembrance to him. And the two most important holidays celebrate his birth and resurrection.

This one man's life has been the subject of more songs, more books and poems and paintings, than any other person in history. Thousands of colleges and hospitals and orphanages and other institutions have been set up in honour of this one man who gave his life for us.

All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the governments that ever sat, all the kings that have ever reigned, have not changed the course of history as much as this ONE SOLITARY LIFE.