

A PILGRIM AT THE FAIR: Jester's Guide

Staff:

Friar: Director and storyteller

Circus folk: - Run booths at Activity Fair

Minstrels: A band with instruments and songs for outdoor singing. (Suggested colorful minstrel garb, ribbons on instruments, Tambourines and drums, etc.) Simple lively Theme Related songs for children. An upbeat "Poor wayfaring stranger" is the Theme song,

Jesters: A troupe of several players who present the Melodramas. They will have to work out and present the dramas, and costume themselves appropriately. They will stay in character through most of the school.

Milords and Miladies: The teachers and their helpers.

Keep order, work with children on materials and crafts, lead in Games, and class work sessions.

(Two for each class group minimum) (Team may include Minstrels and Jesters).

Fair Crier: A Go-for helper/ time-keeper/ Scorekeeper and Melodrama Player. May have assistants.

Themes, Lessons and the Ongoing Melodrama: The Jesters and their Skits

Stage: The fair should have booths, with a stage and seating (hay bales??) with two of the "fair booths", one on either side – one belonging to **da Boss** (a crooked "try your luck games" booth) (nobody ever wins), the other belonging to **Lady Elizabethan** (who has clothing and gowns for sale) In between is a raised platform where the Friar hangs out, telling stories, interviewing people, etc. It has a simple stool when he can sit. (Shields or banners behind it) Other carnival booths can be arranged on the sides. Nerf Archery? Coin Toss, etc. Quote a verse and play?

Jesters: A troupe of several players who present the Melodramas. They will have to script out and present the skits and melodramas, and costume themselves appropriately. They will stay in character through most of the school. The Jesters should add plenty of fun to the fair!! Juggling, jokes and other "acts" can be included. Many of these skits will have to be improvised by the Jesters – as scripts are not provided for many of them.

Characters needed include:

Friar (The VBS Director), A "Friar Tuck" sort of character, Brown robe, rope belt, wooden cross, staff, warm laughing voice. Fond of quoting half a verse and letting someone finish it. Engaging storytelling skills. (May dress-up as a Bishop for the final ceremony.)

Traveller (King), A quiet serious and slightly mysterious "stranger". Dressed in ragged traveled clothes. Hooded. Intense, but seemingly devout, highly moral and intolerant of dishonesty. (He will be revealed as the King on the last day - dressed in his royal robes and crown)

Pilgrim, young, uncertain, foolish, a bit of clown, baggy shorts, suspenders and a goofy hat - or a bi-colored Jester's outfit with "dagger edges", bells. An orphan employed by da Boss.

Da Boss -(male or female roll), Modelled after "Capt'n Hook" - extravagant in dress, Tri-cornered Hat, blustery and loud, bossy, blatantly sneaky and very fond of money. Unfortunately for the Friar, da Boss is a major contributor to the cost of the fair – forcing the friar to just barely tolerate da Boss's questionable activities.

The Lady Elizabethian (Tuesday and Thursday)- Peasant woman's outfit - ankle length gown, tunic, apron, scarf. Busy, Matter a fact, has Clothing booth at the fair - she takes no guff from Da Boss.

A Wealthy Merchant (Tuesday only - may be played by Herald) - Vain, fond of wealth, very well dressed, bags of money.

The Crier (Herald) (May be around all week as timekeeper - special roll on Thursday and Friday), Fond of crying "Hear ye! Hear ye!" Very newsy, somewhat nose-y. Tunic (divided into four sections with heraldry is traditional), hose and a cap with a big feather. Carries around a Trumpet

The Over all Theme is: Jesus has come to seek and save the lost.

Luke 19:10

Daily Lessons are based on Parables in Luke. The Melodrama Skits will "illustrate" them, as well as add a lot of fun for the children.

Melodrama summary: On going plot lines Who is the Mysterious "Traveller"? Will Pilgrim meet the King? Will Da Boss gets his due? Traveller (the King in disguise) is seeking an orphaned child - pilgrim, now a servant of the wicked Da Boss. Finding Pilgrim, Traveller invites him to journey to the celestial city. Pilgrim tries to bear a great burden imposed on him by Da Boss, supposedly stuff for for the King. Traveller, however runs the fair race bearing pilgrim's "burden", wins and then mysteriously disappears. Meanwhile an invitation comes to a great banquet for the King on the morrow. the King's invitation is extended to all to come as they are. Pilgrim wrestles with doubts, But at the Banquet, traveller reappears now as the King, amidst joyful celebration , Da Boss is banished and Pilgrim is welcomed as the King's son.

Skits and lessons:

DAY ONE: Lost and Found Day.

Theme: God in love is seeking after his lost children, and His great joy when they are found.

"Lost and found" exercises and mini-dramas during the Vanity Fair: - Various fair folk (staff) losing things and then excited finding them.

Friar visits da Boss's booth, as he is bossing Pilgrim around. ("Your just an orphan who should be grateful I feed you once in a while." "Pay you!!? Just be glad I let you work for me!") **Friar** is a bit skeptical about the honesty of **da Boss'** games. **Da Boss** Reminds Friar of the generous contributions which **da Boss** has been made to the fair's budget!! **Pilgrim** sent on an errand. (Be sure and call attention to his unique hat!) (Purpose of skit to introduce these "characters")

Lady Elizabethan will act out the parable of the lost coin. **Friar** goes to her booth and asks her for her booth rental fee. She can't find it. She begs the friar for some time. Then She searches her booth frantically, sweeps and finally finds it! With excitement, she gives it to the Friar, recounting her search.

After some singing, pilgrim with the minstrels, Da Boss drags him off (See **Traveller interview Script**)
Song: In God's Green Pastures or similar song about sheep

Then **Traveller** (dressed in rags) arrives passing out "Lost child" posters, searching for the "pilgrim". (The drawings of the lost child includes the distinctive hat) Perhaps the Friar will take him up on stage and "investigate this stranger in town" – asking him a series of questions (quoting half a verse each time) and getting answers (that also finish the quote). Traveller is looking for a lost child – an orphan. (The Stranger, however, is not really giving him the whole truth to be revealed on the last day – he is actually the King seeking his lost son.) As a part of this discussion, Traveller tells the **Parable of the Lost Sheep** to Friar, before dismissal to classes.

.Class Lessons from Luke 15:1-10.

[Make sure that Pilgrim - wearing his distinctive hat, is never be around when the traveller is - though the children will keep saying "We have seen Him," he won't be "found" until the end of the final assembly that day where Pilgrim wanders in (hopefully the children will call attention to him) and Traveller invites him to take a journey with him to the heavenly city.

DAY TWO: Rich Man's Burden day

Theme: Love not the world or the things of the world - trust [faith] in God.

Song

Friar announces a wealthy merchant is coming to the fair, hoping maybe the merchant will make a contribution to the fund for the poor fund. (**Lady Elizabethan** preens herself – “maybe he needs a wife” -- so she will look alluring; then **Da Boss** with an evil laugh anticipates how much the merchant will lose to at da Boss’s booth!)

Song ... interrupted as ...

The Wealthy Merchant arrives with a **bodyguard**, in a limo (if outdoors), flaunting his wealth, dressed in a tux, handing out lots of play money, visiting the booths, staff fawning over him, and **Friar** trying to have a talk with him. As he brags about how wealthy he really is, **Friar** hoping to ask about a donation, keeps bringing up his wealth, but **Friar** gets repeatedly interrupted by his bragging. Finally **Friar** is interrupted by **da Boss** inviting the merchant to roll dice – in da Boss’s stall, (which is right beside the stage) **The Merchant** gambles and in several rolls of the dice bets and loses everything to **Da Boss**. **His body guard** quits to go to work for her as he walks away pockets out, **Friar** finally asks the **Merchant** for a contribution – merchant finds one last dime in his pocket and gives it to Friar (“It’s all I have got left”) and the **Merchant** leaves all alone.

After a song or two...

Pilgrim comes in and tells da Boss he is quitting to journey to the heavenly city. He is worried about the trip. Da Boss supplies (weighs him down with a tremendous pack of "stuff" he needs for the journey as well as "gifts" [bribes] for the King (Making asides to the audience about the schemes he has for this sucker. – “ I will weigh him down so much, he won’t get very far, and will crawl back to me!”))

Class Lessons from Luke 12:15-34

Final Assembly : Pilgrim then staggers under the burden of stuff onto the stage. Then Friar tells Pilgrim the story of the rich man and the barns, and why he shouldn’t not worry about the future.

DAY THREE: The Prodigal

Theme: Jesus runs The good Race in our place.

Today is the day for field events. Races, etc. If you can, have some events and games for the children to play. **Friar** announces these, noting that “The big event” will be the staff obstacle race!!

Da Boss has been trying to make bets on various events - Finally **Friar** is upset and confronts him/her - suggesting he/she is trying to rig the race – he/she "denies" it - Brings out her "champion" **Pilgrim** still bearing the previous burden and then weighs him down more. (Some how letting it slip to the audience several times, she is betting against him – she also pays some of the other runners to lose!) As the runners are called to the starting line, The **Lady Elizabethan** presents him with a silk scarf. But he can barely move - **Traveler** then volunteers to take pilgrim's place. With all the burdens, “stage” the Obstacle race, make it silly (with several other runners deliberately losing or cheating –complete with tripping, sword fighting, and other cheating, urged on by **da Boss** making remarks about her bets on her favorite. But **Traveler** wins anyway. But when the awards are given out - he is missing.

Friar shows the way to the heavenly city (book) during the final Assembly to Pilgrim.

DAY FOUR: Invitations Day

Theme: God has good news for us - and he welcomes all who are willing to come

(Traveller's day off - he has disappeared!!)

The Herald makes a lot of "Good News" announcements, (Hear ye! Hear ye!) maybe he has a trumpet to blow too.

Da Boss and The Lady Elizabethan do a "good news"/ "Bad news" skit. (Lady Elizabethan recounts a string of increasingly outrageous events building on each other revolving around da Boss's horse and cart. [fortunately... unfortunately...] each increasingly silly and alternating good and bad.

Song . . .

Herald announces a Royal Feast tomorrow, the King is coming!!

Excuses Skit - Herald tries to pass out a handful of invitations to a royal feast - but gets a bunch of really silly excuses from various people. **Da Boss** keeps raving about how he/she's going - but da Boss will have no dinner with peasants, etc to Lady Elizabethan.. **Da boss** keeps getting overlooked, though she keeps thinking the next one will be hers. Finally **Da Boss** gets one – he/she's ecstatic. Then **Herald** announces that the invitation has extended to all the poor and crippled and homeless. Now **Da Boss** starts making all sorts of excuses to the Lady why she won't be there after all. She's gotta go look for the horse! She leaves.

After some songs...

Another Good News Bad News Skit - Herald and Friar – Friar is concerned for the poor! This is a big occasion! The king is coming! What if the poor have nothing to wear? No money? They aren't beautiful or handsome? No way to come? Herald answering all Friar's objections with the good news of the gospel! - The Lord is our righteousness – everything will be provided for them!

Class Lessons from Luke 14:15-24

DAY FIVE: Getting ready for the King's Coming Day

Theme: Be diligent in serving the Lord, for He is coming back with salvation and Justice.

Talk is all over the Fair - the King is coming to the fair. Excited talk of everything need to do to get ready by the people in the booths.

A trio of women "go nuts" at Lady Elizabethan's discussing what they will wear, then going through the booth, tossing gowns around, posing before a mirror, admiring or putting down each other, they first can't make up their minds, this one, no that one, then they start fighting over the dresses, tearing one in half. **Friar** breaks things up, as **The Lady** starts picking up after them.

After some songs...

The **Friar** tells the parable of the Pounds (to the Lady who is still trying to straighten up the mess. "How can I ever be ready in time?")

Class Lessons from Luke 19:11-27

At the final torchlight ceremony, **Traveller** will arrive to be welcomed as the King, The Staff can "dress up" (medievally, of course) for this "regal procession and ceremony". Perhaps the **King** will arrive on horseback. As traveler is recognized, **Da Boss** makes excuses for her behavior, but is exiled from the fair. **Da Boss** starts groveling begging for mercy and forgiveness, as **pilgrim** wanders in. As **Pilgrim** is Recognized by **Traveller, the King** rushes out with open arms to welcome the **pilgrim, his son!** To put a royal robe around pilgrim and replace pilgrim's hat with a crown!

Traveller gives a brief Gospel presentation and invitation – yes even somebody as bad as **da Boss** can be forgiven if they turn from their sins, and everyone goes for ice cream and goodies!