



3. Animal Stories: Scripture and the Saints- Activity 7

BALAAM AND THE DONKEY

Equipment: Bible, paper with a drawing of an angel standing on a road, cardboard cutout of a donkey with Balaam on her back, blue-tack or similar sticky material and a blind-fold.

Activity: Read the story of Balaam and the donkey (Numbers 22:22-35).

Play a game similar to pin the tail on the donkey, but with the object of placing Balaam and the donkey on the road next to (but not in front of) the angry angel.

Purpose/Teaching: In the story Balaam's donkey repeatedly turns aside from the route he wants to follow, and he abuses her for this behaviour. Unbeknown to him however, the donkey can see an avenging angel which God has sent to punish Balaam, and keeps veering off course to stay out of harm's way. Eventually God gives the donkey the power of speech to remonstrate with Balaam, and Balaam's eyes are opened so that he can see the angel. The angel scolds Balaam for being cruel to his animal, and makes it clear that not only would he have killed the him had the donkey not intervened, he would have left the innocent beast unharmed! The donkey is presented in this story as an individual in her own right. She is not treated as an object, but as a living being who deserves kindness and respect.

