**Zoom Good Friday Interviews**

The meeting needs to include **Luke**, **Theophilus**, **Peter** and **Mary Magdalene**. It could also include either or both of **Pilate** and **King Herod** or the **Centurion** and **Simon of Cyrene** or **Joseph of Arimathea**. Assume that if someone is speaking they are unmuted and everyone else is muted as per normal Zoom procedure unless otherwise stated. Should you need more actors some of Peter’s lines could be shared with John or another disciple, and some of Mary Magdalene’s with one of the other Mary’s or Joanna. They could share screens.

Costumes and zoom backgrounds
(Costumes and backgrounds could be appropriate for 1st Century Palestine or the modern day as long as everyone is in the same time period.)

**Luke** is dressed in regular clothing; his background is either a hospital or a home office set-up. Luke is the host and moderator of the meeting.

**Theophilus** is wealthier and dressed better, his or her background is of somewhere more exotic, far away from the others, hence why he or she doesn’t know what has happened.

**Peter**, not wealthy, dressed in a recognisably marine manner, or with a marine background.

**Mary Magdalene**, dressed in ‘Sunday best’, possibly in a garden.

**Centurion**, dressed as a soldier, any background but bonus points for extra military things.

**Pilate**, older, dressed like a judge or a government official, background is smart, would be nice to have the palace of Westminster, Whitehouse, Reichstag in the background.

**King Herod**, posh in clothes and background, definitely wearing his crown, may well have servants attending him bring wine and grapes etc. When other people are talking he is talking to someone offscreen or snacking and looking bored.

**Simon of Cyrene**, black, farmer’s clothing and background to show that he’s from the countryside.

**Joseph of Arimathea**, well off, well dressed, fancy background.

Part 1 Intro and Peter

*A Zoom meeting. On gallery view – We see all black screens in the meeting with their names under their pictures. Everyone is on mute. First* ***Luke*** *turns his camera on, then* ***everyone else*** *does too.*

**Luke:** Hello everybody, thank you for coming. Some of you I’ve already spoken to before. (Theophilus waves, Peter gives a thumbs-up) As you know, I’m Luke and I’m carefully investigating the life of Jesus of Nazareth for my good friend here; the Most Excellent Theophilus. I’ll just do quick introductions.

***Luke*** *names all the people in the Zoom call except for himself and Theophilus, as their names are said they wave.*

**Theo:** Thank you, thank you Luke – I’m very excited to be here and to hear from everybody. Let’s get started, shall we? (Changes name to Most Excellent Theophilus)

**Luke:** Of course, if you remember Peter was telling us about Jesus’ last dinner with his closest friends. Peter would you like to continue with that.

*Switch to speaker view.*

**Peter:** Jesus had been telling us some tricky things to understand, about how to remember him when he’d gone, and he’d sent Judas Iscariot away – we all thought Judas was just going to give money to the poor but he was actually going to tell the priests where they could find and arrest Jesus. And then we went to the garden.

**Mary:** Excuse me, aren’t you forgetting a little detail Peter? Something you said to Jesus. (**Peter** looks embarrassed) I know it’s a little embarrassing, but Luke needs to hear everything. (Pause) None of us laughed when we heard about it, did we? And I’m not sure that I’d have said anything different if I’d been there.

**Peter:** Okay then Mary, what happened was that we all knew that Jesus was going to get into big trouble with the chief priests soon, so I said that if anything happened, I would go with him, even to prison, even to death.

**Theo:** That’s very brave of you Peter.

**Peter:** No, I wasn’t brave. Jesus said that before the cock had crowed in the morning, I would have said I didn’t even know him, not just once but three times. Which is what happened. We all went out to the olive garden and Jesus prayed and we slept, and then Judas brought men and soldiers to arrest him. I did actually try and fight back at that point, but I only cut a guy’s ear off. Jesus didn’t want us to fight to protect him, he knew he had to go… he even healed the guy’s ear.

**Mary:** Most of the other disciples ran away when they realised Jesus was choosing to let himself be killed, but not you Peter.

**Peter:** I didn’t do much better though, I followed him into the high priest’s house and sat in the courtyard. But every time someone asked me if I was one of Jesus’ friends I said ‘No’, I didn’t know him. … (*Sadly*) Then the cock crowed, and I remembered what Jesus had said, and I left him.

Part 2 Pilate and Herod (Can be skipped if you’re short of time or actors)

*Switch to gallery view.*

**Luke:** Thank you so much Peter for telling us everything that happened, that night. I hope everybody else will be as honest as you, so we can find out what really happened. So, Jesus has now been arrested and is on trial.

**Herod:** Oh, oh! Is it finally my turn? I’m quite sure everybody has been dying to hear what I have to say!

**Luke:** Sorry, your majesty, I believe Pilate saw him first.

**Pilate:** Actually, the chief priests interviewed him first, got him to say that he was the Son of God and then brought him to me for a more thorough trial.

**Herod:** But you couldn’t get Jesus to answer any of your questions and sent him to me.

**Pilate:** And did he answer any of yours?

**Herod:** Ugh no, he was soooo dull. I’d been looking forward to seeing him, he was supposed to be this grand miracle worker, but he didn’t do a single thing.

**Peter:** (Unmuting and speaking over Herod angrily) Maybe because you had him on trial!

*Arguing breaks out between Herod, Pilate and Peter. Lots of ‘But you said’ and ‘You could have listened’ and ‘I had to.’*

**Luke:** Okay, everybody. You’re all on mute. I think it’s best that we let everybody tell the story the way they think it happened. Can we all agree to speak one at a time? (*Everybody nods or puts their thumbs up*). King Herod, could you continue please?

*Change to speaker view.*

**Herod:** Well, the man was sooo boring we laughed at him, dressed him like the king he claimed to be and sent him back to Pilate.

**Pilate:** Since neither of us had found any reason to kill the man, I just had Jesus beaten and was going to set him free. But the priests and the crowd really wanted him dead, shouting for him to be crucified and for Barabbas to be set free instead. Despite the fact that Barabbas was obviously guilty of murder and rebellion against us Romans and your Jesus seemed completely innocent. I didn’t really want to, but they wanted it so much that it was just easier in the end to do what they wanted and send him to be crucified with the others.

**Herod:** Ugh, even talking about such things is so boring. You’ve got all you want from me so I’m going now. Waste of my time even being here. Bye! (*He leaves the meeting.*)

**Luke:** Oh, well, you are of course welcome to leave now as well, Pilate, as I think we’ve heard all we need from you.

**Pilate:** I think I will, only, I should like to say I didn’t let the priests have it all their own way. I made sure that the sign that went on Jesus’ cross said ‘This is the king of the Jews’ (*he holds up the sign*). It annoyed them no end. Goodbye then, Dr Luke, Theophilus, everyone else. (*He leaves the meeting*.)

Part 3 the Centurion and Simon

*On gallery view again.*

**Luke:** After Jesus was put on trial by Pilate and Herod, he was sentenced to be crucified which means killed on a cross. Centurion, I believe, that you were in charge of this? Could you tell us about what happened?

**Cent:** Yes, sir! Permission to share a map of Jerusalem, sir!

**Luke:** Yes, of course.

*The screen of* ***the Centurion*** *is show. On it is a map, with a red line marked up the Via Dolorosa and several places marked on it.*

**Cent:** Jesus along with two thieves was taken from Pilates’ palace, marked on our map as ‘A’, up to the place of execution at Golgotha, marked as ‘B’. All three men carried their own crosses as is standard procedure for the condemned. At point ‘X’ an unidentified stranger was recruited to carry the cross for Jesus from point ‘X’ to point ‘B’.

**Luke:** Oh, we’ve been able to identify the stranger, and he’s actually here. Simon would you like to tell us what happened at point ‘X’, I mean when you picked up the cross.

*Switch to speaker view.*

**Simon:** Yeah, sure. I was just visiting Jerusalem for the Passover festival, so, I just happened to be there. I was just asked to carry the cross of a criminal on the way to be executed. And, of course, if armed soldiers ask you to do something you do it, right? Those crosses are heavy, right, and I was NOT happy about having to carry it for a criminal, me being completely innocent and all. I didn’t know who it was at the time; I had heard of Jesus – it’s would have been hard not to in the last three years, right? Jesus stopped to talk to some crying women not long after I’d picked up the cross. Told them not to be sad about him, but to be sad for themselves ‘cos worse things were going to happen. Could have been really depressing right? But it was kinda nice to see how, even as he was walking to his death, he was still thinking about others more than himself.

*Going back to* ***the Centurions*** *screenshare.* ***The Centurion*** *marks on the map next to the ‘X’ a ‘W.’*

**Cent:** Thank you for the report, Simon of Cyrene, I will take it from here. At ‘B’, all three men were nailed to their crosses, Jesus was in the middle. (*A second slide shows a timeline, from the previous evening to the evening of that day. The cross is marked on it as is darkness and an arrow marking the temple.)* Some of the crowd and the soldiers made fun of Jesus, and his clothes were divided out among the soldiers on duty. At 12 o’clock, when normally the sun is at it’s highest there was an unprecedent darkness, reports say it covered the whole country and lasted for three hours. Other reports say that the curtain in the temple which separates the rest of the temple from the most holy place was torn in two at the moment when Jesus died. End of report.

*Switch back to speaker view.*

**Mary:** I was there too. I thought you said something just after Jesus died.

**Cent:** I did. I’ve crucified other men before, but his death was so unlike anyone else’s I’ve ever seen. All those strange things happening, all that people had told me about Jesus, everything he’d said and done while on trial, it convinced me that he wasn’t a criminal, wasn’t even an ordinary man. I know I’m a Roman and not a Jew, but I praised God that day, for sending a man like that to save us.

Part 4 Mary

*Speaker view.*

**Luke:** Mary, you were one of the people there when he died, could you tell us more about that, please?

**Mary:** I was, I don’t think I’ll ever forget it, and there are parts of It I really don’t want to forget. We were standing near the cross, and it was horrible to see what they did to him, and to hear people making fun of him; telling him to save himself, but not actually wanting him to. But I was close to hear what we said – he never answered back, and never complained about what they were putting him through but instead he prayed: asking his Father to forgive the very people who were killing him and who wanted him dead. (*Pause*) One of the criminals also being crucified with Jesus joined in with the people insulting him, but the other one realised that Jesus was innocent, that he didn’t deserve to be there, that he hadn’t done anything wrong. He asked Jesus to remember him when he became king, and what I’ll never forget is Jesus’ answer. He said, ‘Honestly, you’ll be with me in paradise tonight.’ (*Pause*)It was almost the last thing he said before he died to reassure, this stranger, this criminal, that because he trusted him he could be with God in heaven. And then he died.

*Pause*

Part 5 Joseph

*Gallery view again.*

**Luke:** Joseph, were you also there, when he died? I know you were around for some of this whole process.

**Joseph:** I was there almost all the time, I’d known that the chief Priests and the leaders were trying to have Jesus killed and I hadn’t agreed to it. I thought from his miracles and his teaching that Jesus must have had something to do with God’s kingdom coming.

**Luke:** So what did you do?

**Joseph:** Well, I couldn’t have prevented Jesus from dying, but as soon as I knew he was dead I made sure he had a good burial, that he wouldn’t be buried like a criminal. So I went to Pontius Pilate and asked to have Jesus’ body.

**Luke:** And he let you have it?

**Joseph:** Yes, I had a tomb that hadn’t been used at all and I think Pilate was quiet happy for me get Jesu’ body out of their quickly and have the whole thing finished and done.

**Luke:** So, Jesus had a proper burial, then?

**Joseph:** Nearly, I had the body taken off the cross and wrapped in linen cloth. Then we took it to the tomb, laid him on the shelf inside and rolled the stone across the entrance so his body would be safe from anybody looking to steal the linen, or even in the unlikely event that someone would want his body. But we had to hurry to get him buried before the Sabbath rest started that evening, because it’s not okay for us Jews to do any sort of work then.

Part 6 End

**Mary:** I followed Joseph, to the tomb. We knew there wasn’t time for a proper burial right then but my friends and I wanted to make sure we knew which tomb was the right tomb so that after the Sabbath rest we could come back and say our goodbyes. Which we did, or at least we tried to…

**Luke:** I’m sorry everybody, I’m afraid we’re running out of time.

**Theo:** Since this isn’t the end of the story, perhaps we could meet again? I mean it should only be a quick meeting since there can’t be a lot to say about someone who’s now dead.

**Luke:** Oh, just you wait Theophilus, just you wait.

*Black Screen*