

Gregory the Great: Reader's Theatre

Read the notes on Reader's Theatre that are provided with this script. (See accompaniments)

Church history made accessible through theatre, the Game Show Host introduces you to Gregory the Great and his significant role in spreading the gospel to Britain. The audience participates, playing the role of the studio audience. The Host entertains and teaches by presenting a timeline of events, and commenting on the political/religious climes of the period.

This show may be performed for any audience but for a more interactive family event consider pairing the Reader's Theatre with a family dinner. The hall becomes a Hollywood TV studio, with both food and costuming themed accordingly.

Dinner Theatre:

A dinner invitation could look like this:

“THIS IS YOUR LIFE” STUDIOS

Respectfully requests your presence for dinner and

"The story of GREGORY THE GREAT"

at the TIYL Great Studio

on Saturday, November 7th, at 6pm.

Costuming from the year of our Lord, 1980 is suggested. (Go ahead! Get creative!)

The menu will include Soup, Caesar salad, and freshly baked bread.

The doors to the Studio will be open to all eggheads, eccentrics, and the extraordinary

The topic of discussion:

SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD

Presented as an interactive Reader's Theatre

written by Norma Bennett

(Put this quote on the back of the invitation)

“If the work of God could be comprehended by reason, it would no longer be wonderful, and faith would have no merit if reason provided proof.”

and/or

“We make Idols of our concepts, but Wisdom is born of wonder.”

Length:

There are two options available:

1. Gregory the Great as a performance (approximately 45 min)
2. Gregory the Great as a Dinner Theatre (approximately 2 hrs) and needs a point person to organize the dinner.

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

The TV Game Show Host (Male or Female: Dan or Kathy)

Gregory the Great (the contestant)

The Studio Troupe:

Player #1

Player #2 (female)

Player #3

Player #4

Player #5

Player #6 (male)

Player #7

Player #8

Player #9

Gregorian Chant Choir (either physical or audio)

(This script has been set up for 9 players, however, that number may vary according to your own resources—just reorganize the numbers to suit you.)

Setting:

Stage and Prop Suggestions

Time in History

540—604AD

SETTING and SUGGESTIONS:

The stage is set as the TV game show “This is Your Life!” The audience is the TV studio audience. 6th century Gregory the Great is called from the audience as the show’s contestant. The Host may stand SL and Gregory, SR, with the Player CS. Gregory will ring a bell whenever he is ready to move on to a different time frame. The Player will move into place when the bell is rung and act out the period of Gregory’s life that is described. There are many possibilities for fun blocking and choreography—be creative! Some blocking suggestions have been included. An actual time-line in macro is a great tool. One of the Players may point to the year being discussed. You may also put the timeline on the dinner tables. The Host may include a review of the time-line with the studio audience before Gregory is called on stage. It is helpful to visually set the time in history. A sample time-line has been included in the back of the script. The Players should have boxes or stools that they sit on when not participating in the action. Gregory and Host should have stools and podiums. There are many places music could be included (such as every time the phrase “THIS IS YOUR LIFE!” is said).

COSTUMES:

Gregory: Period clothes

“Monk” arana Players: Monk cowl - head and shoulder - covering

Players: All cast dress in basic black

Host: Hollywood style

Gregory the Great: Script

Host: Ladies and gentlemen of the studio audience, welcome to tonight's episode of "THIS IS YOUR LIFE"! It may be YOU who will be tonight's guest of honour! Listen closely as our very own Studio Players reveal WHO our mystery guest is! Is this your life?

Player 1: Well, Dan (Kathy), this person was born in Rome in 540 AD and died in the year 604.

Player 2: He lived during the time of the great plague that killed half the population of Europe.

Player 3: He was Prefect in Rome during the time of the Arian Lombard invasions.

Player 4: In 573 he became a Benedictine monk.

Player 5: A few years later, he was recalled to Rome for political reasons.

Player: 6: In the year 590 he became Pope.

Host: And now, studio audience, this person could be none other than. . . (*expectant pause*)
Hmmm. He still hasn't recognized that this is HIS life. Ah, studio Players, can you give me any more details.

Player 7: Sure, Dan (Kathy), I have one more. It's such a give away, I wasn't sure I should say it.

Host: Go ahead. And now! Listen to this final clue and tell us--IS THIS YOUR LIFE!

Player 7: The year he was born, Theodora introduced long white dresses, purple cloaks, gold embroidery, tiaras, and pointed shoes.

Player 8: Well that's totally irrelevant, don't you think?

Player 2: No, she doesn't think. . .

(Gregory slowly gets up from audience)

Gregory: Oh yes, yes. Now I recognize it! Well, well, what a surprise. Never expected this.
(etc)

Host: That's right Pope Gregory I, THIS IS YOUR LIFE. *(Gregory on platform)* So tell me Greg, may I call you Greg?

Gregory: *(laughs)*

Oh please, please, my friends all just called me Gregory the Great.

Host: Gregory the Great?

Gregory: Yes, kind of catchy isn't it?

Host: Yes, if you are.

Gregory: If you are what?

Host: Great.

Gregory: Oh great!