

# SEASON OF CREATION

taking childhood spirituality seriously

Godly Play<sup>UK</sup>

As the world, and the UK in particular, prepares for COP26, from 31 October to 12 November, in Glasgow, here are some ideas for the Season of Creation (1 September – 4 October) in the style of Godly Play. They might be just for your own personal reflection, they might be useful in an act of worship or even in a Godly Play room. This is not a new Godly Play story. Stories take much longer to evolve than this one has taken. It is just an experiment, for now, that might help us to think and reflect in the face of the climate emergency that we all face.

## The Calendar of the Agricultural Months

A long time ago, when people lived closer to the earth than we do today, and no one knew the words 'Godly Play', there was still godly play. Some of the players were those who carved the stones for the great buildings where people gathered to worship God. They were the stone masons, and they carved stones for walls and doors and towers. But they also carved stones into pictures.

And just as we have our Godly Play presentation plaques today, telling us the stories of Creation, and Advent, and the Faces of Easter, and Knowing Jesus in a New Way, so they carved pictures in stone that told stories. One of the stories they carved was The Calendar of the Agricultural Months, because when you live close to the earth and grow your own food, when there are almost no shops, every month matters, and every month is different. So it is really important to know what to do when. Because if you forget, and miss something out, there will be no food, and you will be hungry. Sometimes the pictures were called The Labours of the Months, because all of this was hard work. But the pictures did another job too. They were a way to say thank you. For the gifts of the months are good gifts: they are very good.

On page two are some pictures from one of those Calendars. It is carved onto the Cathedral in the Italian city of Parma – the home of Parmesan cheese and Parma ham. (People certainly know about food there!) One picture (March) comes from another place, as the picture was missing or too difficult to photograph in Parma.

### *Here are some ideas for wondering*

I wonder what you like best about each month.

I wonder which month is most important.

I wonder what is most important about each of the months.

I wonder if there is any month we could leave out and have all the months we need.

I wonder what you might find to put beside this story to tell the story some more.

I wonder if there is any Godly Play story or presentation that we could put beside this story to tell both stories some more.

I wonder what it would be like to live like this.

Text and ideas are new and experimental: feedback would be very helpful. Contact [chair@godlyplay.uk](mailto:chair@godlyplay.uk). Everything may be reproduced for your own use. The individual images are available to download for your own use from the website [www.godlyplay.uk](http://www.godlyplay.uk). Photos: Tom Ambrose



January is cold but we can look back over the last year, and forward to what is to come.



February is still cold, so not much can be done outside but people might go fishing.



March is a good time to prune trees and vines and cut the hedges. *(This picture is the odd one, from Autun in France.)*



April, and the soil has warmed – time to put plants in the ground.



May, and with everything planted, there is time for something else: some hunting, perhaps.



June – time to cut grass with a scythe, so there will be hay for animals in the winter.



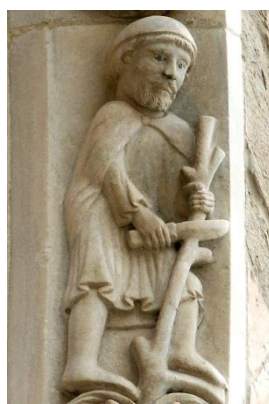
July is when the wheat and barley are harvested with a sickle, ensuring enough bread for the year.



August is the month for barrel repair, ready for the September grape harvest.



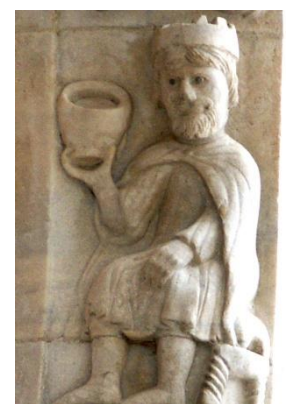
September is when the grapes are picked.



October means gathering fire wood for winter warmth.



November and the pig is killed. The meat must last the winter.



December, when all the work is done, is time for feasting and parties.