

*Scripture  
& the  
Creative  
Arts*



# Scripture & Drama



**‘A biblical story requires a biblical effort!’ (Daniel Petrie)**

Of course, Scripture can also be dramatised in simpler ways. For ideas about dramatising the Bible in the classroom: [sweeterthanahoney.dbbcso.org](http://sweeterthanahoney.dbbcso.org) (‘The Word and the Arts’)

Some 800 years ago, St Francis of Assisi developed a tradition of telling the Gospel story of the birth of Jesus using real people and live animals. For two years running, St Leo’s Catholic College, Wahroonga, has continued this tradition by mounting its own dramatic re-telling of the Nativity.

Titled *The Road to Bethlehem*, the St Leo’s production involves students and staff as actors, musicians, singers and in the making of life-size sets, 250 sq m of painted backdrops and over 60 handmade costumes and props. The addition of live sheep, three camels and a well-behaved donkey complete the dramatic picture.

As students from St Leos and children from neighbouring schools gather to witness all this (along with families, parishioners and residents from the neighbouring aged care facility), their faces say it all: this is one Christmas pageant they will never forget!

Director of *The Road to Bethlehem*, Daniel Petrie, points out that there is more to this event than a creative extravaganza. ‘More than anything else, we see this as liturgy. It is not just a “play”, it’s prayer and scripture, enacted with and amidst the local community. It’s a sacred role, which we take very seriously, because we are handing on the story of our great faith tradition.’

Participating student-actors concur. Said Natalie Zeaiter who played Mary, ‘Holding a live baby in my arms and laying the baby in the manger made me very emotional. I felt nervous just as Mary would have been as a new mother.’ Ian D’Souza, who played Joseph agrees. ‘Smelling the camels, trying to lead the donkey while Mary was on its back, made me feel like I was there. You can’t help being affected.’