



## On your marks

This reflective story was first used on a parish weekend with the theme 'unity in Christ'. The passage from 1 Corinthians about the church being like a body is a familiar one; however, turning the words into something concrete and visible, as this story does, gives young and old a chance to engage with it more directly and hear what God is saying to them about their own feelings with regard to their part in the body of Christ.

## Get set

The text of 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 comes from the CEV (Contemporary English Version).

You will need: a backcloth, on which to lay the pieces for the story; some 'body parts' as indicated, perhaps cut from foam card (feet; hands; head; main body part; arms; legs; some internal organs; large eye; large ear; underwear)

## Go!

The numbers refer to the verses in 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 in the CEV.

### ***Place the backcloth down.***

12. The body of Christ has many different parts, just as any other body does.

### ***Place body parts on to the backcloth, all jumbled up.***

14. Our bodies don't have just one part. They have many parts.

### ***Pick up a foot.***

15. Suppose a foot says, 'I'm not a hand, and so I'm not part of the body.' Wouldn't the foot still belong to the body?

### ***Pick up an ear.***

16. Or suppose an ear says, 'I'm not an eye, and so I'm not part of the body.' Wouldn't the ear still belong to the body?

### ***Place a large eye over the body.***

17. If our bodies were only an eye, we couldn't hear a thing.

### ***Place a large ear over the body.***



And if they were only an ear, we couldn't smell a thing.

***Sort the body parts to make a body on the backcloth.***

18. But God has put all parts of our body together in the way that he decided is best.
19. A body isn't really a body, unless there is more than one part.
20. It takes many parts to make a single body.

***Temporarily remove the hands, then replace them.***

21. That's why the eyes cannot say they don't need the hands.

***Temporarily remove the feet and then replace them with an Anne Robinson-like wink, then use the following paraphrase of the next line of the Bible text:***

That's also why the head cannot say to the feet, 'You are the weakest link. Goodbye.'

***Add in internal organs.***

22. In fact, we cannot get along without the parts of the body that seem to be the weakest.

***[Optional section...]***

***If you use this, place underwear over the groin.***

23. *We take special care to dress up some parts of our bodies. We are modest about our personal parts, 24. but we don't have to be modest about other parts.]*

***Run your fingers over the body on the backcloth part by part, caringly (this sounds bizarre but you know what I mean!)***

24. God put our bodies together in such a way that even the parts that seem the least important are valuable. 25. He did this to make all parts of the body work together smoothly, with each part caring about the others. 26. If one part of our body hurts, we hurt all over. If one part of our body is honoured, the whole body will be happy.

***Look up and indicate everyone in the circle.***

***27. Together you are the body of Christ. Each one of you is part of his body.***

***Pause and then ask some open-ended questions, reflecting on which part of the 'story' they like the best and which part is important for them at the moment, and so on.***