

All Saints

- That Ancient Thread

If you're an SMTV viewer you'll have seen the game 'EAT MY GOAL' - use this same idea to kick your session off. For those who aren't sure what 'EAT MY GOAL' is all about, it's another name for a penalty shoot out. Split the group into two teams and get everyone to have a go.

Ask the group to come up with their **fave XI football team**. Get everyone to feed-back, maybe do this in small groups to help those who don't like football.

Then share that in a sense the church is like a team. **Read Hebrews 12:1-2** and talk about the great cloud of witnesses.

Then **show a clip** from The Fellowship of the Ring - where Aragorn battles with his past.

"You are Isildur's heir... not Isildur himself. You are not bound to his fate." The Elven Princess, Arwen breezes into the room to where Aragorn looks with sadness upon the broken heirloom of his heritage. "The same blood flows in my veins... the same weakness." His voice trails off barely above a melancholic whisper...

One of the great things about Lord of the Rings is the sense of history. It is the unfolding of a continuing saga that has stretched back across grief and victory to the very beginnings of time.

The same is true of us, as Christians, as Sons and Daughters of God. We are part of an unfolding story written in the very fabric of Creation - the fall and redemption of mankind. There have been great heroes and heroines of the faith throughout time and this ancient thread is sewn into us. "The same blood flows in my veins..." instead of the disappointment this brings to Aragorn, it brings us hope, inspiration and encouragement. The blood of heroes has been spilt for the Gospel and this blood flows in our veins - it is the blood of Christ, the blood of a life poured out for the salvation of many.

Talk about the All Saints XI we've picked [there could have been many others!]. Each player is an ordinary person who God has used to do some awesome things. Use the team of 'All Saints' to encourage and inspire the group that each of them are a player in history... in HIS-story - let this great cloud of witnesses, cheering you on, encourage you to persevere, to run the race, to play the full 90 minutes for God.

PLAYER PROFILES

Name: PETER
Age: 64ish (Circa AD 65)
Position: Goal Keeper (The Rock - Gospel in Safe hands)
Notable quote: "In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold... may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ..." 1 Peter 1:6-8. Executed by Nero, crucified upside down.

Name: ROY PONTON
Age: 15 (1984-1999)
Position: Defence (Soldier of the Faith)
Notable quote: "I am a Soldier of Christ", which he confessed as he was brutally murdered.

Name: TERTULLIAN
Age: 65 (160-225 AD)
Position: Central Defence (Christian Apologetics)
Notable quote: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church"

Name: STEPHEN
Age: 25ish (Circa 34AD)
Position: Central Defence (Died for defending the faith)
Notable quote: "Lord Jesus receive my spirit", as he was stoned to death for his faith and proclamation of the Gospel.

Name: WATCHMAN NEE
Age: 69 (1903-1972)
Position: Defence (A great wealth of writings to train and defend the faith)
Notable quote: "...in my sickness I will remain joyful at heart." Written on the day of his death. Spent his last 20 years imprisoned on false charges.

Name: PAUL
Age: 64 (1 - 65 AD)
Position: Midfield - Captain (Apostle who covered a lot of ground and directed the Church)
Notable quote: (Aside from 2/3 of the New Testament), "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;..." 2 Timothy 4:7. Executed by Nero.

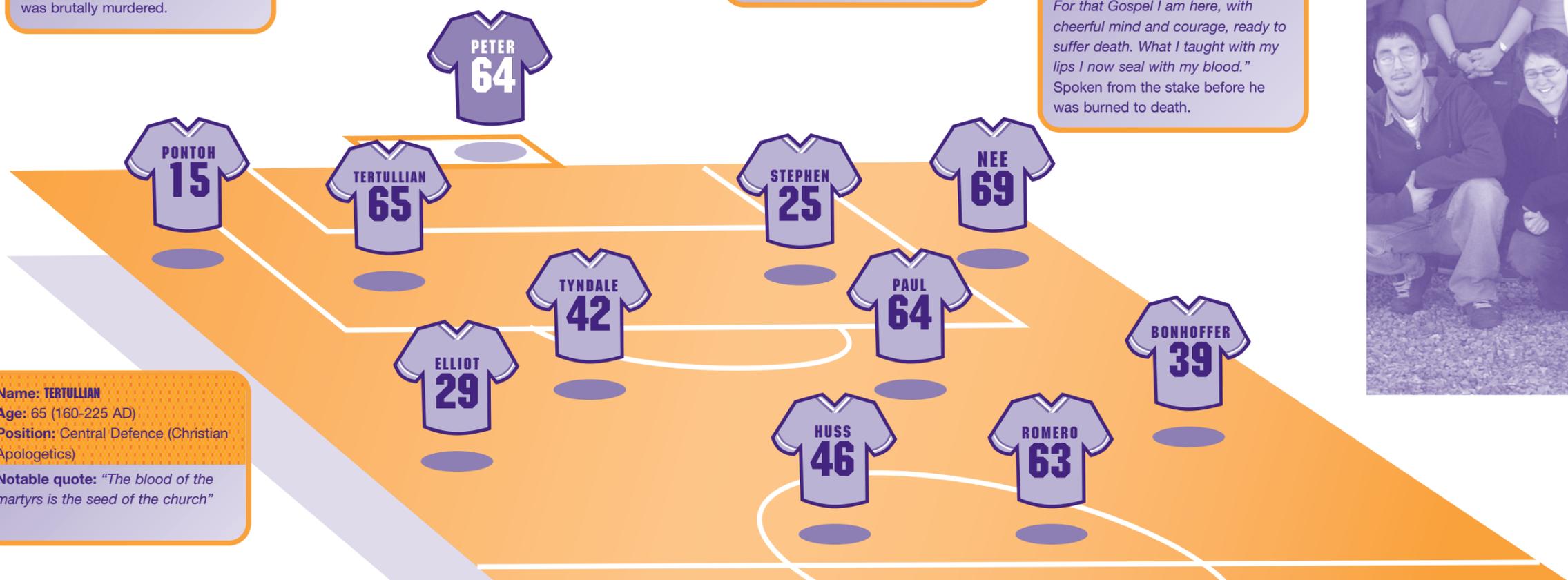
Name: JIM ELLIOT
Age: 29 (1927-1956)
Position: Winger (Flying gift drops to the Auca Tribe)
Notable quote: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." Speared to death by a head hunting tribe he was trying to reach for Christ.

Name: DIETRICH BONHOFFER
Age: 39 (1906-1945)
Position: Midfield
Notable quote: "A Christian is someone who shares in the sufferings of God in the world." Executed by the Nazi's during World War II.

Name: WILLIAM TYNDALE
Age: 42 (1494-1536)
Position: Midfield (Good distribution of what is central to the faith)
Notable quote: "In fact, if God spares my life, I intend to make it possible for a common farmer, a ploughman, to know more of the Scripture!" Burnt at the stake for translating the Bible so that all people could read it.

Name: OSCAR ROMERO
Age: 63 (1917-1980)
Position: Striker (Direct at attacking injustice)
Notable quote: "I am bound, as a pastor, by divine command to give my life for those whom I love, and that is all Salvadoreans, even those who are going to kill me." Assassinated during Communion.

Name: JOHN HUSS
Age: 46 (1369-1415)
Position: Striker (Forward in preaching the Gospel)
Notable quote: "What error should I renounce? I am guilty of no wrong. I taught all men repentance and remission of sins, according to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For that Gospel I am here, with cheerful mind and courage, ready to suffer death. What I taught with my lips I now seal with my blood." Spoken from the stake before he was burned to death.



ROUND UP

Round up the session with a time of worship and prayer. Thank God for each person in the group, pray for each others current situations and ask that the Holy Spirit would inspire each person to give their all for God, just like the ALL SAINTS team.

But don't just keep the focus on the group spend time praying for the **global team** of Christians - get some up to date prayer points from underground - so you can pray for people who really need it. Contact emmaw@opendoorsuk.org or call 01993 885411.

EXTRA TIME

If you've time for more energetic activity at the end why not have a game of football or crab football.

THE FINAL WHISTLE!

