**Children’s liturgy – Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)**

**Preparation of the worship space**

Colour: Green

Props: Coloured pens and pencils. Name badges. Paper cups and plates.   
'Welcome mats' or make 'welcome mats' out of cardboard.

**Song suggestions:**

Follow me, follow me. *(175, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)*

**Welcome:** Today we hear how Jesus calls 72 people to follow him and of how he prepares them for the journey. Let's find out what happens...

**Opening prayer:** Welcoming God,you call us to you with open arms and yet so often we find it difficult to answer you. Help us to hear you more clearly and to follow you always. Amen.

**First reading (optional):** Isaiah 66:10-14

**Psalm:** Psalm 65:1-7, 16, 20. R. v.1

**Gospel acclamation:** everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. Suggestions include: ‘Halle, halle, halle’ (Caribbean) from ‘Sing With the World’, Alison Adam & John Bell; ‘Alleluia’ (Zimbabwe), Abraham Maraire Publications, WCC & GIA; ‘Celtic Alleluia’ (traditional); ‘Alleluia! Raise the Gospel’ from ‘Go Before Us’, Bernadette Farrell, OCP Publications.

**Gospel:** Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

**Gospel reflection:** What do you remember from today's reading?

Luke tells us that 72 people are sent out on a mission by Jesus. They were to go to the cities and villages where Jesus and his disciples would soon go themselves. So they are sent on ahead to prepare the way.

Why do you think Jesus wanted them to go before him?

We see that Jesus sends out the 72 people in pairs. Jesus sends them out in pairs so that they can keep each other company on the journey and they can look after each other. It's safety in numbers. Can you think of another story in the Old Testament where there are lots of pairs together? (e.g. Noah's Ark)

Jesus tells the 72 that there is much work to do, but not enough people to do it. *“The harvest is great, but the labourers are few.”* He is asking for their help.

Jesus tells them to travel light without a purse, bag or sandals and not to greet anyone they meet on the road as they are in a hurry. There is no time to waste.

Imagine you are one of these people - how do you feel about this mission? How do you think the 72 people felt when they heard Jesus' words and warnings?  
  
The 72 followers are told that they may not be welcome in every town. Not everyone will want to hear their message. Why do you think this might be?

The 72 were going into towns where people were busy with other things.   
They didn't want to change their ways but the disciples are asking them to change their life and to follow Jesus now.

Can you think of things in your life that stop you from spending time with Jesus?

What are these things? (*e.g. latest toys, computer games, money, clothes, TV..)*

When we focus on *things* rather than *people* what happens?

Why is it important to follow Jesus and share the good news?

Do we always show welcome to other people? Or can we be like those who turned the 72 away?

Think about how you welcome visitors at home and at school. Do you offer them a drink or something to eat? Do you give them a special chair to sit in? What do you do?

This week try to make sure that you are always welcoming to others. What will you do? And how will you go out and follow Jesus, sharing his good news with others?

**Intercessions** *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or*

*you can use the suggestions below.*

Jesus calls us today, just like the 72 people in the story so we pray together:

We pray for the Church: that it may follow Jesus’ example and share his good news, while welcoming all people. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for world leaders: that they may work more closely together to meet the needs of their people. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for our parish: that we may find God in all that we do and focus on the things in our life that are really important. Lord in your mercy...

**Closing prayer:** Christ our Messiah, you call us to follow you. Help us to be welcoming to others and spend time on the important things in life. Amen.

**Activity suggestions**

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration. Ask them to write or draw on the back how they will welcome others in the coming week.

Ask the children to get into threes or fours and give them all name badges - write either 'disciple' on each badge if they are in pairs to travel about, or write their first name if they are the homeowner/homeowner's wife. Enact the scene of two people knocking on a door and being greeted happily by the homeowner(s) and being welcomed in to eat. Use the *welcome mat* to walk on as they enter the house and the plates and cups when they are eating.

Ask the children to write a prayer of welcome for people of different countries which can be said out loud or can be used later in the week at home or school.

Ask the children to think about how they can follow Jesus more closely and the things that stop them from spending time with him. Can they spend a bit less time this week on one thing e.g. watching TV/computer games and a bit more time with God either alone or in helping someone else?

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about this week. Ask them to try to follow Jesus closely in the coming week and be welcoming to others in all that they do.