

Third Sunday of the Year

Follow me

INTRODUCTION

Jesus called the first disciples to follow him, and they left everything and went with him. Today each of us is called to follow Jesus by sharing God's love with everyone as he taught us to.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and sing the Candle Song together.

SORRY

Listen carefully to the words of this story told by St Matthew (*cf* Matthew 18:21-22, 35):

One day Simon Peter asked Jesus, 'Master, how many times must I forgive someone who hurts me? As many as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not just seven times, Peter, but seventy times seven! You must always forgive someone from your heart.'

Ask the children to sit quietly and think about what they have just heard before reading this prayer:

Dear Jesus, please help me to be forgiving
and ready to forget the mistakes
made by other people,
just as you are always ready to do for me.

Jesus gave us the gift of his peace to be shared with other people. Later when we share in the Eucharistic meal at Mass today, we will offer a sign of peace. We have asked for God's forgiveness in our prayer and now we offer a sign of peace and friendship by shaking hands with each other.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 2:
Light up our hearts.

GOSPEL (*cf* Mark 1:14-20)

After John the Baptist had been arrested by Herod, Jesus began to preach to the crowds and proclaim the good news. One day while walking beside the sea of Galilee he saw Simon Peter and his brother Andrew casting their nets to catch fish.

Jesus called out to them 'Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of people.' The brothers left their nets and followed him. Further along the

shore Jesus saw James and his brother John who were mending nets with their father Zebedee. Jesus called them too, and at once they left their father and followed him.

DISCUSSION

Can you remember the names of the brothers who left their boats and nets to follow Jesus? – Simon Peter and Andrew; James and John.

What did Jesus say to them? – He asked them to follow him and become 'fishers of people'. Jesus needed someone to help him with proclaiming the Good News of God, and to carry on his work when he had returned to his heavenly Father. These men would help him to lead people back to God, and to teach others of God's great love for them.

Many people followed Jesus and became his disciples, but Jesus chose a small number of them to carry on his work. How many did he choose, and can you remember some of their names? – Jesus chose twelve apostles. The name 'apostle' was given to a follower of Jesus who had been specially chosen. They were all close friends of Jesus, who were chosen to preach and perform miracles in his name.

The names of the twelve apostles were:

Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, (another) James, Thaddeus, Simon and Judas.

Does Jesus call us to follow him too? – When we are baptised into the Christian family we are called to be followers of Christ. But Jesus calls us to follow him every day.

How can we do this?

To follow Jesus we do not usually have to leave home like the first disciples did! By loving God and our neighbour we can follow Jesus every day by living as Jesus taught us to.

ACTIVITY

The children can cut out these invitation cards. They can then fill in the blanks and decorate their cards.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, help us to follow you each day,
so that in our own small way
we can help to make our world a better place.