

Children's liturgy – Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: green

Song suggestions

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

Welcome: Today we hear about how it is not always easy to follow Jesus or to accept what God wants to happen in our lives. Even Peter, one of Jesus's disciples found it difficult. Let's think some more about this today...

Opening prayer: Christ Jesus, you call us to follow you. May we have the courage to answer that call, even in the most difficult times. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 50:5-9

Psalm: Psalm 114:1-6, 8-9 r. 9

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: Mark 8:27-35

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

Jesus asks his friends, the disciples, a question. He asks them who people think he is.

What answer do the disciples give? (*Elijah, John the Baptist – you may want to remind the children who these people are*)

Jesus then asks the disciples who they think he is. What does Peter say?

Peter believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. He has faith in Jesus.

But then Jesus starts to tell the disciples about what will happen to him. That he will suffer and be killed, but that after three days he will rise again. Peter struggles to believe all this - he does not want to believe that his friend, the Son of God, will suffer and die.

Peter feels afraid that Jesus might leave them. And he wants to protect Jesus from harm because he cares about him.

It is sometimes hard to do what God wants us to do, just like it was for Peter, because we are afraid, and we do not want to get hurt, or for those that we love to be hurt.

Jesus tells us that it will not always be easy to follow him, but that we must have courage, because God will always be with us.

Can you think of a time when you were afraid and needed courage?

Some children have to leave their homes because fighting means it is not safe for them to stay. It can be very frightening.

Mary is seven and from Syria, a country where there has been lots of violence. She had to leave her country with her family and now lives in Jordan. She has been going to a special project where children like her can use puppets to talk about the things that have happened to them and some of the things that frighten them.

Mary says, "I live with my parents, seven sisters and two brothers. I am in the middle. I was five when I came here from Syria. I miss things, like my grandmother. We used to play together. It was a small house in Syria, but very beautiful. I would like to be a doctor so that I can give medical treatment to patients."

What does it mean to follow Jesus? What can we do to show that we are following Jesus?

Can you think of a time when you have found it difficult to do what you knew was right and follow Jesus? Why was it so difficult?

Will you be brave in the coming week? What will you do over the coming week to show that you follow Jesus?

Intercessions *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

We are called to follow Jesus and so together we pray:

We pray for all the world's leaders: that they may have the courage to make the decisions that are best for all people, even when it is difficult. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all our brothers and sisters living in poverty: that they may be able to work together and build a better future for themselves. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that we may be true followers of Jesus, reaching out to help people who are poor, sick, lonely or frightened. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of light, as we try to follow you, give us the courage to reach out and help others, so that we can build a fairer world. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and to write in the banner how they will follow Jesus this week.

Ask the children to tell their family all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to try and show how they are following Jesus in all their actions this week.