

Children's liturgy – Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: Green

Props: Coloured pens and pencils, paper or card.

Song suggestions:

Follow me, follow me (863, *Laudate*)

Welcome: Today we hear a little bit about how hard it can be to follow Jesus. Let's think about how we can do our best to follow Jesus today and help all those who are in need.

Opening prayer: Christ Jesus, you call us to follow you and to live our lives as you want us to. Help us to answer that call. Amen.

First reading (optional): 1 Kings 19:16, 19-21

Psalm: Psalm 15:1-2, 5, 7-11 r. 5

Gospel acclamation: *everyone stands and sings the acclamation together.*

Gospel: Luke 9:51-62

As the time drew near when Jesus would be taken up to heaven, he made up his mind and set out on his way to Jerusalem. He sent messengers ahead of him, who went into a village in Samaria to get everything ready for him. But the people there would not receive him, because it was clear that he was on his way to Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?"

Jesus turned and rebuked them. Then Jesus and his disciples went on to another village.

As they went on their way, a man said to Jesus, "I will follow you wherever you go."

Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lie down and rest."

He said to another man, "Follow me."

But that man said, "Sir, first let me go back and bury my father."

Jesus answered, "Let the dead bury their own dead. You go and proclaim the Kingdom of God."

Someone else said, "I will follow you, sir; but first let me go and say goodbye to my family."

Jesus said to him, "Anyone who starts to plough and then keeps looking back is of no use to the Kingdom of God."

(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below)*

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from the reading today?

Three people offer to follow Jesus. But Jesus tells them it will not be easy.

To the first person, Jesus says that there will be nowhere comfortable to stay on their journey. He says that animals have their own houses – foxes have holes and birds have nests – but that he doesn't have a nice house to live in. He must travel and isn't sure where he will end up sleeping each night.

How would you feel if you had to leave your home behind and you didn't know where you'd be sleeping tonight?

Another man says he will follow Jesus, but first he wants to go and say goodbye to his friends and family. Jesus says there's no time for that, and if he is serious about following him, the man must come straight away.

How would you feel if you had to leave home and you weren't able to say goodbye to those you love? And if you weren't sure when you'd see your loved ones again?

For many children and adults who are refugees this is what happens. Refugees are people who have to leave their home because it is no longer safe.

When people flee their country they often have to leave very quickly and they cannot take their things with them. They often have to leave friends and family behind.

For more information on CAFOD's work with refugees to share with the children see: <http://cafod.org.uk/Education/Primary-schools/Refugees>

Why do you think Jesus tells those who want to be his followers that they can't say goodbye, or that they won't have a nice place to stay?

Jesus is letting them know that following him is not easy. Not everyone will understand their choice to follow him. They will have to change the way that they think about things. What is important to them, might not be what Jesus is asking of them.

What do you think this means for us today?

We know that it is not always easy to follow Jesus. It can be hard to love others and to treat all people as we would wish to be treated.

For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

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There might be people who laugh at us or who disagree with us when we try to live as Jesus asks us to.

But we can make a choice – to follow Jesus no matter what. Even when it is hard. And we can ask God to help us through prayer, as well as asking our friends and family for help.

We can make the choice to help people who are hungry to get enough food, or thirsty to get enough drink. We can help those who are homeless find somewhere safe to stay. We can share what we have and care for those who are sick or lonely or sad.

In all these ways, we can show that we are following Jesus and we will also be sharing God's love with others.

How will you follow Jesus this week? And what will you do when you are finding it hard to follow him?

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

Jesus calls us to follow him and so we pray together:

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that it may be a place of mercy and love for all people. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for refugees who have been forced to flee their homes: that they may find a place of welcome and safety. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for peace in our world: that all people may be able to live free from fear of violence. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may follow Jesus and share God's love with one another, especially those who are in need. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of mercy, watch over those who have been forced to flee their homes. Help us to follow you and to reach out in help to all who are in need, so that through us they may know your love. Amen.

Activity suggestions:

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustration of some of the ways in which we can show that we are following Jesus through our actions. Encourage them to write or draw on the back how they will follow Jesus, or what they will do when they find it hard.

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Remind the children to share all that they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with the people at home. Remind them to do all that they can in the coming week to follow Jesus and live as he asks us to, even when it is difficult.

*Gospel passage taken from:

Good News Translation® (Today's English Version, Second Edition)

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