

Early Summer - Cycle C - Revised Common Lectionary
Pentecost through Proper 10
May 27, 2007 - July 15, 2007

We remain Easter people, now with the wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails. Our task for the months ahead, in this season of Ordinary Time, which extends to the end of November, is to look at what Jesus so tenaciously taught his disciples and see what is in these teachings for us, as we carry out the work we have been given to do. Jesus promised his disciples a helper, an Advocate, who would stand with them making the work possible. This same helper, the Holy Spirit, hovers over us, still eager to quench the fire of fear and replace it with the powerful energy of love.

Proper 8
July 1, 2007
Luke 9: 51-62

A notation for this week's Gospel

Rejection. To the disciples' horror, the people of the village did not receive Jesus. Retribution, they insisted! "No," said Jesus, moving on. Follow, they decided. But what would "follow" mean? Maybe to follow is to hold focus. Staying on focus involves choosing the important and not getting bogged down in the urgent. What is the "important" that we follow?

Lesson Plans for Older Children

Theme: Where do we go when we follow?

Before Class. Since there are several voices in this passage, it would be helpful if you would download it and highlight the different voices to make it easier for the children to read the passage and figure out who is saying what. One site is: www.devotions.net/bible/00bible.htm. There are others.

Beginning. Tell the children Jesus is still teaching his disciples. Today they are learning about following and what it means to follow Jesus.

Opening Prayer. You teach us to follow you, Jesus. Help us to understand how to follow you. Amen.

The Scripture. Luke 9: 51- 62. Depending on how many children you have, ask for volunteers to read the highlighted parts — doubling up on readers, if needed. You need the voice of the narrator, James and John speaking together, someone who shows up on the road, Jesus, and two other persons who show up on the road.

Some Questions.

Why didn't the people of Samaria want to hear Jesus? (Samaritans were considered "outcasts" by the Jewish people. We will have another story about Samaritans in two weeks.)

What was the disciple's reaction to not being invited in? (They were furious! Verse 54b)

What did Jesus do? (He "rebuked" them. What does that mean? Scolded.)

What happens as Jesus and the disciples walk on to the next town? (People show up and start walking along with them.)

What do you think Jesus is trying to help people decide about following him? (Are they sure they can put Jesus first?)

What does Jesus say to the first person who says they will follow? (Verse 58)

What happens when Jesus says "follow me" to the second one? (Verse 59b-60)

And what happens to the third person who says he/she will follow? (Verse 62)

Invite the children to discuss the responses. Do we think Jesus really did not think it was important for a man to bury his father or was he trying to help the man set priorities? How do we set priorities with the important things we have to do?

Option. Give the children sheets of paper and pencils. Suggest they fold the paper in half, and then in half again. Open the sheet of paper back up and create titles for the bottom two quadrants. Could be **Very Important** for one and **Important** for the other. Then, give an example from your own life of a choice you have had to make: Taking the dog for a walk (Important) or sitting with your child as she worked on a really hard piece of homework (Very Important). Invite the children to note some decisions they have to make at the top of the page — and either now — or later, draw an arrow showing into which column each decision could go.

Getting Closure. Brainstorm with the children about what our world would be like if EVERYONE truly followed Jesus, that is, did what Jesus told us to do: loved the way Jesus invited us to love. Tell them that if we can dream something it could happen. Encourage them also to notice things that already are happening. (Football players tutoring children in the inner cities, doctors seeing patients in clinics and not charging, other caring things happening in your own community.)

Closing Prayer. Thank you, Jesus, that you show us how to follow you. Amen.