

Third Sunday of the Year

Follow me!

INTRODUCTION

It is important to remember that Jesus was a very special person, an extraordinary man. Today we hear him ask some fishermen to leave their boats, nets, homes, and families to follow him. The remarkable thing is, that's just what they did!

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Say together:

Fill our hearts with the light of Jesus.

SORRY

We all belong to God's family, and God is our loving father. We are not always good, and we want to say sorry for the times when we have not loved each other. All say together:

Father, forgive us.

Jesus, forgive us.

Spirit, forgive us.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 5.

GOSPEL (MATTHEW 4:12-23)

After Jesus had been baptized by John, he went to live in Capernaum, a fishing village beside the Sea of Galilee. One day he saw two brothers, Simon Peter and Andrew, out fishing together. Jesus spoke to them and they were filled with wonder when he said, "Come and follow me, and I will make you fishers of men and women." The two brothers left their boat and nets at once and followed him.

A little further on, Jesus saw James and John out fishing with their father, Zebedee. Again, Jesus asked them to follow him, and they left their father and went with him. These brothers were the first disciples of Jesus.

DISCUSSION

What were the names of the brothers in the story?

What did they do for a living? What do you think Zebedee thought when his sons went off with Jesus? Jesus was obviously a very special person. Something about him was so different, they were prepared to leave everything and follow him.

What did Jesus mean when he said that he would make them "fishers of men and women"? They would help to spread the Good News, the teachings of Jesus. They would gather the people to Jesus like sheep into one flock, or all the fish into one net! These people would learn to know and love Jesus, too, and would follow him.

Does Jesus want us to follow him too? Sometimes people today give up everything to follow Jesus; for example, missionaries. How can we follow him everyday? By the way we live and treat others:

—by being kind and good;

—by following his rules;

—by loving God and all his people.

We are all fishers of men and women. In our own way we can encourage others to want to know and follow Jesus by the lives that we lead.

ACTIVITY

Cut out a fish shape for each child to color and write their name on them. Place each fish in a net (using a vegetable or fruit bag) and then pin this onto a background scene on the board to complete the picture.

Have the children complete the picture given here, by adding as many varied and colorful fish as they like and drawing a net over them all which is attached to the rope.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, help us to listen
when you ask us to follow you.

Make us strong enough
to walk beside you each day.

Help us to share your love
with others that we meet,
so that we, too, lead people to follow you.

