



Children's liturgy – 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Welcome: Today Jesus tells the crowds that if they want to follow him and be his disciples then they need to give up everything. Let's find out more.

Opening prayer: Guiding Lord, may we love you and follow you all the days of our lives. Amen.

Gospel: Luke 14:25-33

Once when large crowds of people were going along with Jesus, he turned and said to them, "Those who come to me cannot be my disciples unless they love me more than they love father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and themselves as well. Those who do not carry their own cross and come after me cannot be my disciples.

"If one of you is planning to build a tower, you sit down first and work out what it will cost, to see if you have enough money to finish the job. If you don't, you will not be able to finish the tower after laying the foundation; and all who see what happened will laugh at you. 'This man began to build but can't finish the job!' they will say.

"If a king goes out with 10,000 men to fight another king who comes against him with 20,000 men, he will sit down first and decide if he is strong enough to face that other king. If he isn't, he will send messengers to meet the other king, to ask for terms of peace while he is still a long way off. In the same way," concluded Jesus, "none of you can be my disciple unless you give up everything you have."

Gospel reflection:

What do you remember from today's reading?

Jesus tells the crowds two short stories to explain what being a disciple means, and to show us that if we want to follow him we must give up everything.

What do you think "giving up everything" means?

I think that it means that we need to try to see that Jesus is the most important person in our lives.

We must also "carry our cross" which means accepting the thing we find difficult in our lives and asking for God's help in these difficult things.

These difficult things might be people we find it hard to get on with, lessons in school that we find boring or wanting something we can't have. It might be not having enough to eat or even living somewhere where there is violence.

For a few moments in silence, think about what you find difficult and ask for God's help now. Then still in silence pray for each other - that God will be with all of us. While we do this, we know that we are all supported in prayer.

After a few minutes of silent prayer with the children, draw their prayers together with an 'Amen'.

Let's look at the two stories now...

The first story is about a man who wants to build a tower. He must work out the cost to make sure he has enough money and resources to finish the job.

The second story is about a king who is going to war. He must first count his soldiers and resources to make sure he can win the battle.

What do you think these stories are telling us?

Both stories tell us about how important it is not to rush straight into something without thinking about it first. We need to prepare so that we can see our project through to the finish. It needs to be done properly.

Perhaps you can think of something big that you were asked to do. Maybe you thought it was too hard and that you'd never manage it, but it turned out you could do it! How did you feel when you'd finished?

And is there anything you've ever rushed into without thinking about it and then you weren't able to finish or it went wrong? Perhaps you were asked to help your friends at school or to help around the house and you didn't do as much as you could? How did you feel about that? And how do you think the person who asked you to help in the first place felt?

Jesus is telling us that following him and being a disciple is something that we have to see through to the finish. We need to follow Jesus always and this isn't always easy. Often we are distracted by other people or by thinking about what we want, rather than about what Jesus wants for us.

Throughout our lives as followers of Jesus we might have to choose to do what Jesus wants even if it means not always being popular.

It is hard but God is with us all the way to help and guide us.

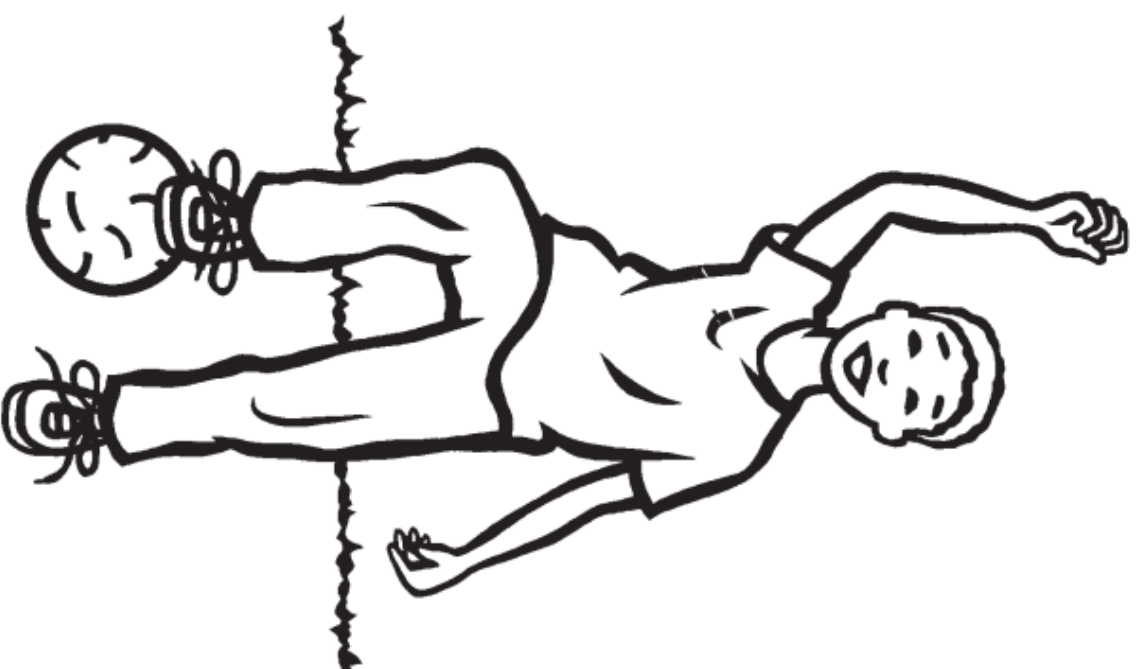
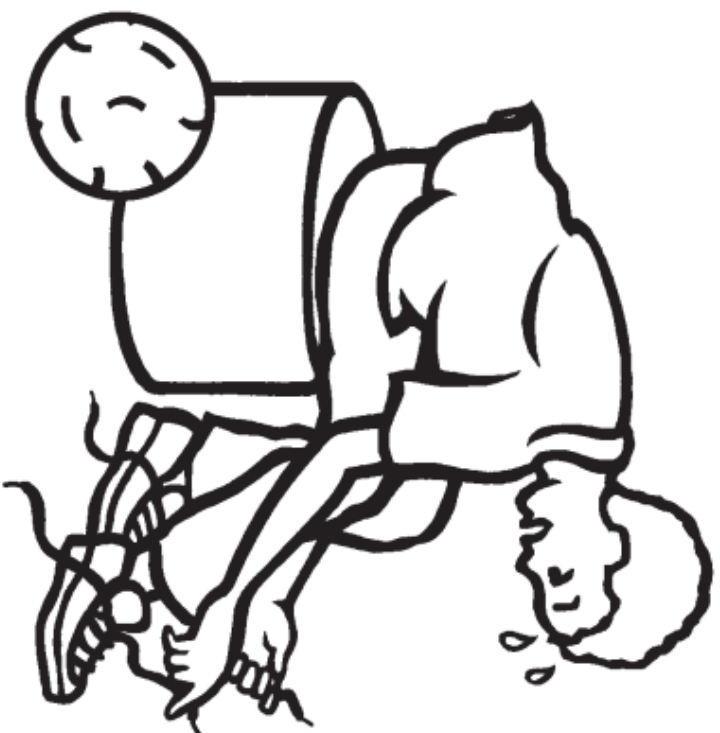
How will you follow Jesus this week at home or in school? See if you can try to do one thing to show that you follow him, and finish it, even if it is difficult. What will that be?

Activity

Colour in the accompanying illustration of someone achieving something difficult and on the back, write or draw what you will do in the coming week to show that you are followers of Jesus.

Remember to share all that you have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with your grown ups. Do at least one thing to show how you are following Jesus in the coming week. This could be in helping a friend or school mate or praying for someone or something else. Can you see whatever they have chosen through to the end, even if it is difficult?

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Gospel: Luke 14:25-33



Find activities and prayers to use at home at cafod.org.uk/families