# Children’s liturgy: Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

## Preparation of the worship space

Colour: green
Props: coloured pens and pencils

## Song suggestions

Here I am, Lord (865, Laudate)

## 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.

## First reading: Wisdom 9:13-18

## Psalm: Psalm 89:3-6, 12-14, 17. R. v 1

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

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

## 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 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 things 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 Jesus tells now…

The first story is about a man who wants to build a tower. He must work out the cost to make sure he 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 had finished?

And is there anything that 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 can be 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?

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

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

We pray for the Church: that it may always work to share God’s love with all people, especially those who are poor, sick or ignored. Lord in your mercy…

We pray for leaders in our communities: that they may do their best to serve everyone that they meet, even when it is difficult or makes them unpopular. Lord, in your mercy…

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may be disciples together and support each other in all the challenges and difficulties we face. Lord, in your mercy…

In this Jubilee Year, we pray that we may be signs of hope in our world through all that we do and how we treat one another. Lord in your mercy…

## Closing prayer

Guiding Lord, give us courage to know you, to love you, to follow you always in how we treat others and care for our world. Amen.

## Activity suggestions

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and to write or draw what they will do in the coming week to show that they are followers of Jesus.

Remind the children to share all that they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with the people at home. Encourage them to do at least one thing to show how they are following Jesus in the coming week. Can they see whatever they choose through to the end, even if it is difficult?

\*Gospel passage taken from:

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

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