

Jesus Calls People to Follow Him

Objective: Students will be able to relate some of the New Testament stories that tell us how Jesus called His followers and explain that we, too, are called by Jesus.

For the Catechist

Learning that Jesus calls us to follow Him is not new for the children who have heard the story of the calling of the fishermen in earlier grades. But this year with the emphasis on reading the New Testament, the children are reading the stories on their own. By having the students become quiet for a short time before they read from the New Testament, you are reinforcing the concept that we must be quiet and ready to hear Jesus' call.

Mary and Martha.

The story of Mary and Martha is a reminder that Jesus is in our midst, and we must take time to listen to Him. The story also shows the concern Jesus had for women: "Mary [who] sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak" (Luke 10:39) shows Mary sitting at Jesus' feet just as we have seen the disciples sitting at their master's feet. This image reveals Jesus' attitude toward women in the Gospel: we see Jesus taking time to teach women just as we have read He taught the disciples.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "Come, let us worship....."

Introduction: Discussion of trust
Need: a backpack or small suitcase

Read Text Aloud: Have the students volunteer to read the text aloud or have the students read sections silently.

Activity Tracks:

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity (detailed on the pages that follow) to reinforce the lesson.

- *Basic:* The Apostles
- *Group:* "Want Ads" for Followers of Jesus
- *Craft:* "Thank You, Jesus" Journal

Closing: "May Our Mouths be filled...."

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
 Saints Peter and Paul
 Packet II: The Great Commissioning

Teaching Pics

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Choice of the Twelve

"He appointed the Twelve as follows: Simon to whom he gave the name Peter; James, son of Zebedee; and John, the brother of James (he gave these two the name Boanerges, or "sons of thunder"); Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus; Thaddaeus, Simon of the Zealot party, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him" (Mk 3:16-20).

The Word of God Grows

"The parable of the sower going out to sow is the source of inspiration for evangelization. The seed is the word of God (Lk 8:11). The sower is Jesus Christ. Two thousand years ago he proclaimed the Gospel in Palestine and sent the disciples to sow the Gospel in the world. Today, Jesus Christ, present in the Church through his Spirit, continues to scatter the word of the Father ever more widely in the field of the world. The conditions of the soil into which it falls vary greatly. The Gospel 'falls by the way-side' (Lk 4:4) when it is not really heard; it falls on 'stony soil' without taking root; it falls 'amongst the thorns' (Lk 4:2) where it is quickly choked by the cares and troubles that weigh upon the hearts of men. Nonetheless, some seed falls 'on good soil' (Mk 4:8) that is among men and women who are open to a personal relationship with God and who are in solidarity with their neighbor. This seed brings forth fruit in great abundance. Jesus, in the parable of the sower, proclaims the Good News that the Kingdom of God is near, notwithstanding the problems in the soil, the tensions, conflicts and difficulties of the world. The Gospel seed makes fertile the history of mankind and promises a rich harvest. Jesus also cautions, however, that the word of God grows only in a well disposed heart" (*GDC* 15-16).

"The Kingdom Is for All"

"At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus proclaimed that he had been sent to announce a joyful message to the poor, making it plain and confirming by his life that the Kingdom of God is for all men, beginning with those who are most disadvantaged. Indeed he made himself a catechist of the Kingdom of God for all categories of persons, great and small, rich and poor, healthy and sick, near and far, Jews and pagans, men and women, righteous and sinners, rulers and subjects, individuals and groups. He is available to all. He is interested in the needs of every person, body and soul. He heals and forgives, corrects and encourages, with words and deeds.

"Jesus concluded his earthly life by sending his disciples to do the same, to preach the Gospel to every creature on earth, to 'all nations' (Mt 28:19; Lk 24:47) 'to the end of the earth,' (Acts 1:8) for all time, 'to the close of the age' (Mt 28:20)" (*GDC* 157-158).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to pray: "Come, let us worship . . ." [Use the prayer page from the last lesson.] Did anyone hear these words prayed during the Divine Liturgy? When? We pray this prayer during the procession with the Gospel Book.

Introduction

Today I brought my backpack with me. Do any of you have a backpack? For what do you use it? (School, vacations) In our backpacks we take what we think we will need. Today we are going to learn about how Jesus called the disciples to follow Him. Let's think for a minute about what we learned last year. Does anyone remember the names of the fishermen who were called by Jesus? (Peter, Andrew, James, and John) What do you think they would put in their backpacks if they had one? (Toothbrush, clothes)

Today we are going to learn that Jesus calls us too. What would you put in your backpack? [Let the children share.]

Let's turn to our lesson to learn more about what Jesus wants us to do when we follow Him.

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Jesus Calls People to Follow Him



After Jesus' 40 days in the desert, He began to travel from town to town telling the people about God's love. Where did He go? **Read Matthew 4:23-25** to find the names of some of the places that Jesus visited. List two of the places mentioned.

_____ **Galilee** _____ and _____ **Jerusalem** _____

Many people came to see and hear Jesus. They interrupted what they were doing so that they could be with Him. People realized that something special was happening around Jesus, and they hurried to be near Him.

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

List two of the places mentioned.

We can find the places mentioned by looking at the map in lesson 5 of this book or on the map after page 12 in our New Testament. [Have the students find the places on one of the maps. Decapolis is not on the map, and Judea is the area of Judah. If you have a map of the world, show where these places are located.]

... and they hurried to be near Him.

Would you have hurried to see and listen to Jesus? Why?

Jesus welcomed everyone who came to listen to Him. Some people He called in a personal way. Do you remember the story about the fishermen who left their nets to follow Jesus? They left their jobs and their families to follow Jesus. **Read Matthew 4:18-22** and write the names of these four men:

_____ **Simon (Peter)** _____ **Andrew** _____

_____ **James** _____ **John** _____

Jesus called these men to be His closest followers. He chose eight others in the same way. They stayed with Him all the time and went wherever He went. Later on, He sent them to different towns and villages to share with others what He had taught them. We call them Jesus' twelve apostles.

Jesus calls people for different reasons and to do different things. Sometimes He calls people to follow Him. Other times He tells people to stay at home and work for God there. **Read Luke 8:38-39** to find out about one time that happened.

Not everyone says "Yes" when God calls them. Sometimes people do not want to leave what they are doing or do not want to give up what they have to follow God. Jesus never forced anyone to follow Him. Everyone is free to say "Yes!" or "No!" One time a young man asked Jesus what he should do to gain eternal life. **Read Matthew 19:16-21** to hear what Jesus said.

What do you think the young man did? **Read Matthew 19:22** to find out and write what the young man did.

_____ **He went away sad.** _____

In the Scripture we read how some people answered God's call. We also learned that other people ignored God's call. They thought it was too difficult to follow Him.

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They thought it was too difficult to follow Him.

Let's think about what we would do if Jesus walked up to us today and said, "Follow me." What would we do if we had to leave everything we have behind? [These are difficult questions for all of us. Their purpose is to help us understand how important Jesus and His teachings were to the disciples who followed Jesus at all cost.]

... so that we can hear His call.

What does Jesus want us to learn from the story about Mary and Martha? (We must pay attention to what Jesus says, not what we think we should be doing.) This lesson reminds us that we should pay attention every time we listen to or read from the Gospel. Let's think of some ways we can make ourselves pay attention. (Look at the priest and not at people who might distract us; look at the icons and picture Jesus talking to us; pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us.) Just like Mary, we have to listen and not be distracted.

Words to Remember: [Read the words together, and use them to introduce, summarize, and/or review the lesson.]

We, too, have been called by Jesus to be His followers. He wants us to be with Him and learn how to live as God's people. This is why we have become members of the Church. We come together with others every time we go to church. We are all there as people who are answering Jesus' call to follow Him.

The first thing we must do as Jesus' followers is to hear His teachings. Some times people want to follow Him but do not make time to listen to Him. Once Jesus visited two sisters, Martha and Mary. One of them listened to Jesus teach. The other cared about something else. **Read Luke 10:38-42** to find out what happened.

Which sister listened to Jesus? Mary

About what was the other sister concerned about? **About serving Jesus**

Jesus did not want many kinds of food; one was enough. Instead, He wanted people to listen to Him.

Someday Jesus will call each of us to do something for Him. Some will be called to marry and raise children to be His followers. Others will be called to leave their families and work for the poor. Some people will be called to join the religious and to become priests, brothers, and sisters. We must learn to listen to Jesus so that we can hear His call.



Words to Remember:
The Holy Land: Places where the events in the Bible happened. When we look at a map today, we find the following countries in the Holy Land: Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: The Apostles

[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Find the names of the apostles in the word find. What would you have to leave if Jesus asked you to leave everything and follow Him? Do we have people in the world today who do that? Who are some of them? (Bishops, priests, nuns, monks, hermits, missionaries) If we are listening to God's call, we will know how God wants us to follow Him.

The Apostles

The names of the twelve apostles are hidden in this square of letters. Find their names (they can be found in any direction) and write them on the lines at the bottom of the page.

T	S	U	E	D	D	A	H	T	W	W
H	S	U	E	A	B	B	E	L	E	Q
O	R	J	A	M	E	S	T	M	P	U
M	N	U	N	A	Z	A	O	P	E	M
A	O	D	C	H	Q	L	Y	U	T	A
S	M	A	D	K	O	V	J	B	E	T
E	I	S	Q	H	Y	J	G	I	R	T
O	S	Z	T	G	S	E	M	A	J	H
A	W	R	L	N	L	I	H	P	X	E
N	A	U	A	N	D	R	E	W	R	W
B	T	F	M	P	I	L	I	H	P	S

1. Thomas	2. James
3. Simon	4. Philip
5. Judas	6. Andrew
7. Peter	8. James
9. Matthew	10. Bartholomew
11. Thaddeus	12. John

(Check your answers by reading Matthew 10:2-5.)

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Group: "Want Ads" for Followers of Jesus

Materials: 3 1/2" x 5" note cards, pens or markers, 2 large sheet of construction paper

Imagine how exciting it was for the apostles to have Jesus call them in person to follow Him. The apostles were lucky to have that happen, but today I am going to ask you to pretend that the apostles applied for the job. What do you think the job description would be for the job of apostle? I'm also going to ask you to think about the job description for a follower of Jesus in today's times.

We are going to make two sheets of want ads today. On note cards we are going to write what we think Jesus was looking for in a disciple during His day. On the other set of note cards, we are going to write a job description for a follower of Jesus today. After you complete a card, tape it under the appropriate title: Want Ads for Followers of Jesus (1st century) or Want Ads for Followers of Jesus (21st century). [Some suggestions: Wanted: Anyone who wants to help Jesus talk about God (1st century) or Wanted: Anyone who wants to read the Bible. Must be willing to spend at least one hour a week (21st century).]

Craft: "Thank You, Jesus" Journal

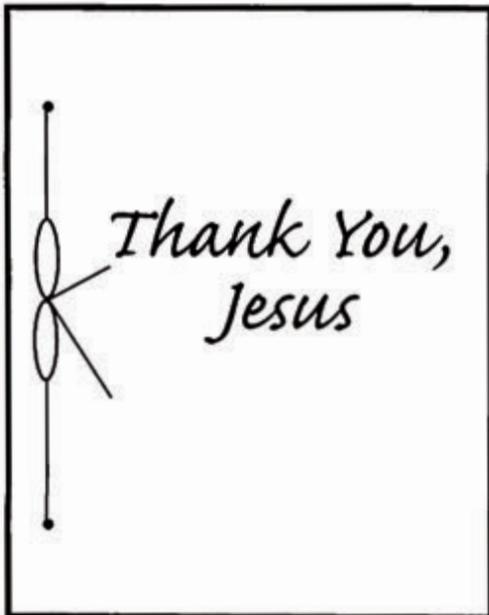
Materials: Journal notebooks

This week we are going to write the following Scripture on the second page in our journals we made last week: "Jesus said to them, 'Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.' Then they left their nets and followed him" (Mark 1:17-18). Under the Scripture write what you think Jesus is saying to you and write a prayer in your own words thanking Jesus for telling you that.

Closing:

Let's pray "May our lips be filled. . . ." Does any one remember when we hear these words during the Liturgy? (After we receive Holy Communion) Let's pray.

[Use the prayer page at the end of this lesson and add it to their song booklets if you are doing that activity.]



Holy Land

Places where the events in the Bible happened. When we look at a map today, we find the following countries in the Holy Land: Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria.

Let our mouth be filled with Your praise

Let our mouth be filled with Your praise,
O Lord, for You have counted us worthy to share Your
holy, immortal and spotless Mysteries. Keep us in
sanctification that we may sing Your glory, meditating on
Your holiness all the day. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Melkite
Greek
Catholic
Church

Let our mouth be filled with Your praise

Let our mouths be filled with Thy praise, O Lord, that we
may extol Thy glory; for Thou hast made us worthy to
partake of Thy holy, deathless, most honored and
life-giving sacraments. Strengthen us in Thy sanctifica-
tion, that all the day long we may learn Thy justice.
Alleluia.

Romanian
Greek
Catholic
Diocese of
Canton

May our lips be filled with Your praise

May our lips be filled with Your praise, O Lord, so that we may sing of Your glory; for You have deemed us worthy to partake of Your holy, divine, immortal and life-creating Mysteries. Keep us in Your holiness, so that all the day long we may live according to Your truth.
Alleluia.

Ruthenian
Byzantine
Catholic
Metropolitan
Province

May our lips be filled with Your praise

May our mouths be filled with Your praise, O Lord, that we may sing of Your glory. For You made us worthy to partake of Your holy, divine, immortal and life-giving Mysteries. Preserve us in Your holiness, that we may meditate on Your righteousness all day long.
Alleluia.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Diocese of
St. Josaphat

May our mouths be filled with Your praise

May our mouths be filled with Your praise, O Lord, that we may sing of Your glory. For You made us worthy to partake of Your holy, divine, immortal and life-giving Mysteries. Preserve us in Your holiness, that we may meditate all the day upon Your justice. Alleluia.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Synod