

**Proximate Preparation
for
Penance and Eucharist**

Session Two



JESUS CALLS US TO BE HIS FOLLOWERS

Office of Faith Formation
Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn
Second Edition 2012

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Preparing the Environment:

Cross, Bible, Large Candle, Small candles for each child
(Please give thought to a space other than a classroom, if possible.)

Part I

(Gather the children and the families to form a big circle.)

Prayer:

We begin today's session: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: Let us sing together, "**Thank you, Lord**" (Carey Landry)

The leader should be in the middle of the circle and sing:

Thank you Lord, for giving us life; thank you, Lord, for giving us life; thank you, Lord, for giving us life, right where we are.

Repeat this song using several names of the children at a time until everyone's name has been mentioned. Then say "thank you, Lord for...what do we want to be thankful for?" Let a few intentions come from the children and the adults. Conclude by saying, "As children of God's family, let us call God our Father to come and celebrate this day/evening/afternoon with us. Pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Part II**Catechesis:**

In our last session our theme was "Jesus calls us to his family". Today our theme is "Jesus calls us to be his followers". A few of our children are going to dramatize the story of the Blind Man from the Gospel of Mark 10:46

Narrator: Jesus and his disciples are on the way to Jericho. A crowd of people have joined his group as he walked along. They have heard of his miracles and are anxious to follow him. A blind beggar sits near the road and he stands by him. The crowd is noisy. All seem to talk at once.

Blind man: (to his friend) What is happening? I hear voices.

Friend: A crowd of people are following Jesus of Nazareth.

Blind man: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! (louder) Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!

Crowd: Be quiet! Stop that yelling!

Blind man: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!

Jesus: (Stops walking): Who calls my name?

Crowd: Only an old blind beggar.

Jesus: Bring him to me! (They all help the beggar to Jesus)

Jesus: What do you have me do for you?

Blind man: Please, Jesus, that I may see!

Jesus: (Touching the man's eyelids): Receive your sight, your faith has saved you!

Blind man: (Opening his eyes): I can see! (He shouts) I can see! Thank you, Jesus! Thank you! (He follows the crowd praising Jesus)

Emphasize the fact that blind people cannot see the light. For them everything is dark. They do not know the different colors, black and white. They don't even know what their parents look like. Because they can't see, they have to depend much more on the help of others more than we do. Think about things you do because you can see! (Allow the children and the parents to share some of the things we do because we can see.)

Jesus tells us, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." How can we follow the way if we do not see the way and the person who leads us?"

The blind man asked his friend who was passing by, what was the noise all about. The blind man's friend knew who was passing by. We need to know Jesus and his ways in order for us to follow him. Once the blind man was able to see Jesus, he got up and followed him.

Let us imagine we are in a very dark room right now. The lights are all turned off. How would it feel to be all in darkness? Take time to listen to their discussion. Quietly light one small candle. Imagine if we really were in darkness, what it would feel like to see this one small candle lit! Emphasize the importance of even a small light in our life.

Sometimes we may think that it is not easy to follow Jesus faithfully. But we are not alone, Jesus is always with us.

Guided Meditation

Let us close our eyes and relax. Imagine that Jesus and his apostles are walking together. They have just been chosen as his special followers. They must feel very privileged, don't you think? Look! A big crowd gathers around them. Many people are waiting for Jesus to heal them. Others are anxious to hear his teachings. Along with the apostles that he has just chosen, Jesus goes up to a small hill. Ah, Jesus sees you in the crowd and makes the gesture of calling you to follow him. People are pushing and shoving. You are trying to get to Jesus as quickly as you can. Finally you get to the top of the hill and sit with Jesus and his apostles under a shady tree. The crowd is sitting down on the grass around you. Jesus begins to speak. He is telling the people to love those who don't like them, to do good to those who insult them. And when people hurt them, Jesus says not to hurt them back. Peter taps you on the shoulder and says, "Do you think you could do good to someone who doesn't like you?" That's a hard question. You will need time to think about it. Jesus continues "Don't judge or condemn others, or you will be judged and condemned. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. Give generously and it will be given to you. If you do these things, your reward will be great in heaven." Jesus finishes his teaching, and everyone gathers around him asking questions all at once. Peter and John get up to leave and invite you to walk with them. Others too begin to walk away, everyone with a rather sad face. Peter is wondering if he can do this. He's a tough fisherman who is used to having his own way. What about Matthew? He's been a tax collector all his life, sometimes cheating people by charging too much. He would really have to change a lot. Look at James and John. They are called the "sons of thunder" because they have bad tempers. Will they be able to hold off judging others when they are angry? Now that these chosen men know what Jesus expects of them, will they continue to follow him, or will they quit? The crowd is gone. Jesus walks over to where you and the apostles are gathered. Jesus asks, "Why do you all look sad and worried?" Peter looks at Jesus and says, "Lord, what you just taught seems impossible for me to do." Jesus walks over to him, stoops down and places his hand on Peter's shoulder. "Don't worry, Peter, I'll help you when it seems like you can't do it." Jesus straightens up and turns toward you. "Do you believe that we are friends?" he asks. "Does a friend help another friend when in need?" You nod your head. Jesus continues to look at you. "Then do you believe that I, your friend, will help you when you come to me. Will you promise to come to me when you need help being generous, kind and forgiving?" Let us spend a minute in quiet time to respond to Jesus in our hearts.

Leader: Jesus, we do believe that you are our friend. We will come to you for help when we find it hard to do what you want us to do. We believe that we can do anything with you by our side helping us.

Part III

Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. (John 14:6)

At baptism we were given a lighted candle by the priest or deacon who baptized us. He told us that this candle reminds us that Jesus is the light and that we have to keep it shining.

Let us sing "This Little Light of Mine"

What is the light that we are going to let shine?

Yes, it is the life and light of Jesus given to us at baptism.
Is that light still lit in our lives or has it gone out?
Are we keeping it shining?

Suggested Activity: Each child who is preparing for the sacraments is given a candle which will not be lit as they process with it to the Church. (If possible, for safety and durability, it would be better to give them a 24 hour candle.)

There should be a special place at the front of the Church where they will be able to place their candles.

Part IV

After the communion prayer:

Invite the children who are preparing to receive the sacraments along with their parents to come to the front of the Church. At this time the parents are invited to light the candles as their commitment to help the children to keep the light of Christ shining in the life of their children and then give it to their child.

Celebrant: Dear parents and guardians, are you ready to accept your responsibility to help your children to keep the light of Christ shining in their lives?

Parents: Yes, we are.

Celebrant: Then as a sign of your commitment, we ask you to light your child's candle and present it to him/her.

Children accept the candles and with their parents form part of the recessional procession. The candles would be blown out at the back of the Church.