

**TWENTY-THIRD  
SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
YEAR C**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

God of mercy,  
Jesus showed us how much  
you really love us  
by dying on the cross  
for our sake.  
Give us the generosity  
to follow him  
and spend our lives  
helping other people.  
We make this prayer to you  
through Christ our Lord.

**FOCUS OF THE READINGS:**

There is not a unifying focus between the first reading and the Gospel. The reading from Wisdom focuses on "How can I know the will of God?" Humanly speaking, it is impossible. It is the presence of God's Spirit that teaches us discernment.

The passage for today's Gospel is part of Luke's teachings on the cost of discipleship. The focus is again the need to be ready to give up everything to follow Jesus. The parable of the builder tells us that living as a disciple is not a haphazard adventure. We must consciously make decisions about how we will act. Discipleship is a choice, and it requires daily decisions.

**FIRST READING: *Wisdom 9:13, 16-18***

*A reading from the book of Wisdom.*

Who can really understand God completely?  
Who can really understand  
what God thinks or what God does?

Sometimes we don't even understand  
what happens here on earth,  
so how can we understand the things of heaven?

But you, our God,  
have given your Holy Spirit to us.  
You have given us your gift of wisdom  
so that we can understand  
what you want us to do.  
With your Spirit,  
we can know what pleases you.

*The Word of the Lord.*

**RESPONSE: *Psalms 90***

RESPONSE:

Fill us with your gift of love. Help us find our joy in you. joy in you.

VERSES:

1. God, our God, ev-er-last - ing, may our hearts al-ways turn to you.  
2. God, our God, ev-er-last - ing, help us know what to do to-day.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



1. "If you would be my dis-ci-ples, ac-cept the cross and fol-low me."
2. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, "Ac-cept the cross and fol-low me."

## GOSPEL: *Luke 14:25-30, 33*

*A reading from the Gospel of Luke.*

One day, when a large group of people was listening to Jesus, he said to them,

"If you want to be my disciple, you must love me more than anyone. You must love me even more than you love yourself. If you really want to be my disciple, you must be willing to carry your cross and follow me."

Then Jesus gave them this example:

"Suppose you want to build something. The first thing you would do is sit down and think about what you need to build it and how much it will cost. Then you would see if you have enough money to pay for it. For if you don't plan before you start, you might get only part of it built and not be able to finish it. And people will say how foolish you are because you weren't able to finish what you started.

"So, you must be willing to give up everything you have if you want to be my disciple."

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

## REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

You will notice that we have excluded the lines of the Gospel that suggest that the true disciple must hate the members of his or her family. Clearly this is not the teaching of Jesus, but a technique familiar to his audience which carried the meaning, as we have adapted it, "we must love him more than anyone." It is a question of being ready to choose him over all things and all people.

Since that concept, in itself difficult for children, has already been discussed recently, it may be well to concentrate on the parable itself.

- Help them to recall the example Jesus gave.
- What other examples can they think of?
  - Making a trip?
  - Planning a dinner?
- Help them to relate this to our following of Jesus. Here, too, we must think about what we are doing and make our own decisions based on being faithful to his ways. Anything that doesn't correspond to his ways must be given up, willingly.



## **Twenty-Third Sunday of the Year**

### **Consider the cost**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

If we are really determined to do something, even though it might be difficult, then we can succeed. Jesus tells us that it is never easy to follow him, but we can succeed if we decide we really want to.

#### **SIGN OF THE CROSS**

#### **LIGHT THE CANDLES**

Light the candles and say Candle Prayer 3.

#### **SORRY**

It is hard to be good all the time, and God, our father, knows and understands this. Let us ask for forgiveness as we sing Sorry Song 4.

#### **GLORIA**

#### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 1.

#### **GOSPEL (LUKE 14:28-33)**

Jesus said to the crowd, "If a man plans to build a house, he works out how much it will cost before he begins. Otherwise, he might lay the foundations, and then find that he cannot afford to finish the work. If a king's army of ten thousand men is preparing to fight an army of twenty thousand men, would the king not consider whether he might win or lose? If defeat is likely, then he will send out messengers to make peace with his enemy."

Then Jesus said, "If anyone plans to follow me, then he must count the cost of being my disciple and belonging to the kingdom of God."

#### **DISCUSSION**

What would a wise man do before starting to build a house? He would first consider the cost of everything he might need cement, wood, bricks, roof tiles, and so on. If the total cost was more than he could afford, then he would be foolish to begin.

What did Jesus say about the king and his army? The king thought about the "cost" to his army of being outnumbered in battle. He could

not win and was not prepared to have his soldiers killed, so he decided not to fight the battle at all and to make peace instead.

It is not easy to be a follower of Jesus and to live as he taught us to. He wants us to think carefully about what is expected of us if we are to be his disciples: to love one another; to keep God's rules; to be kind and forgiving; and all the other qualities of being truly Christian.

Although it can be hard and the costs are sometimes high, why do we choose to follow Jesus? Each of us wants to find true happiness, to be filled with a sense of peace, and to be loved. By following Jesus, we can belong to the kingdom of God, where we will know enough love, peace, and happiness to make any costs worthwhile.

#### **ACTIVITY**

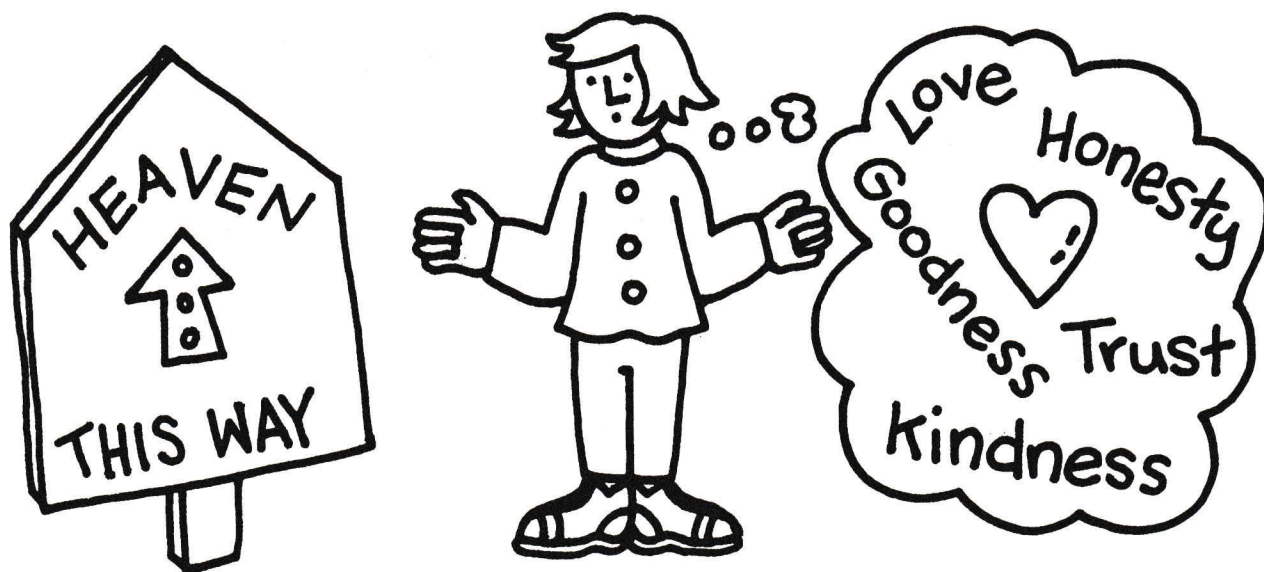
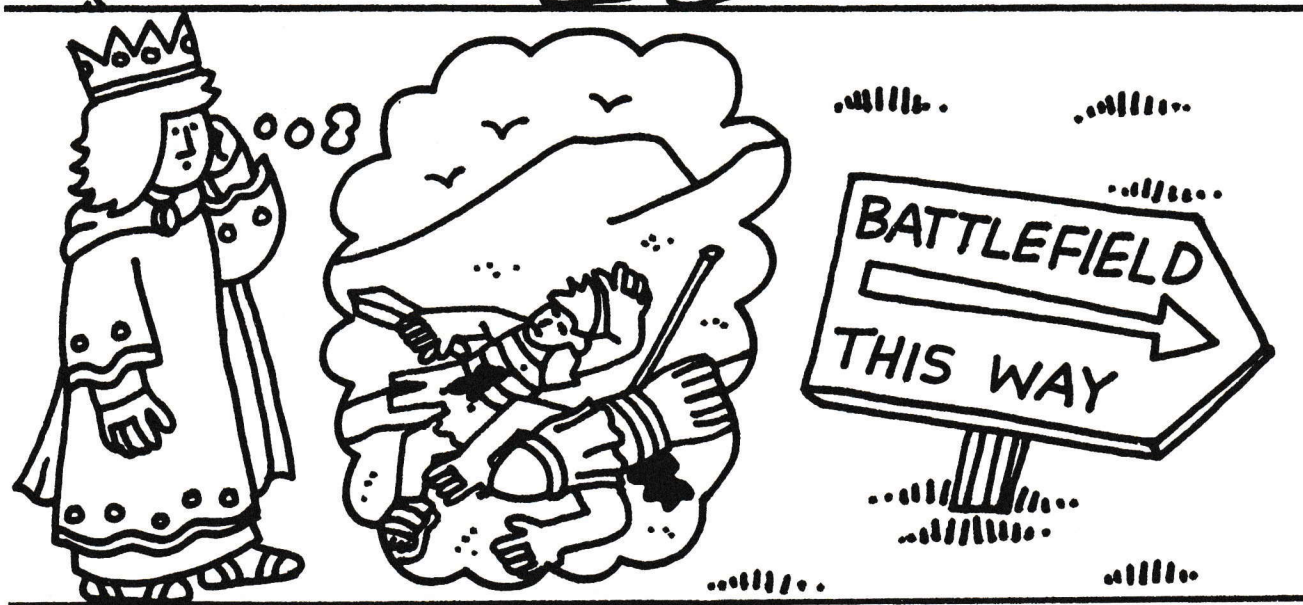
Make a copy of the activity sheet for each child and discuss each picture with reference to today's Gospel story.

#### **CREED**

#### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord, help us to follow you always,  
and give us the strength  
to carry on when we are struggling.

Help us to make the effort  
to do things God's way,  
so we will be able to share in your glory  
at the end of time.





# Twenty-third Sunday of the Year

## Focus

A crucifix, a pair of sandals and a set of weighing scales with heart shapes cut from card.

## Introduction

Any loving relationship demands commitment, loyalty and dedication if it is to survive the ups and downs of everyday life. The efforts and sacrifices we are prepared to make are more than generously rewarded with lasting love. Jesus calls us by name to follow him, but wants us to understand that being his disciple brings its own challenges and costs.

## Gloria

## Gospel Acclamation

Light the Gospel candle and sing Acclamation 5.

## Gospel

A reading from the Gospel of St Luke (14:25-33)

A crowd of people was following Jesus, and he said to them, 'If you want to be one of my disciples you must be ready to love me more than your own family and even yourself. If you do not carry your own cross and come with me, then you cannot be my disciple.'

'If a man plans to build a house, he works out how much it will cost before he begins. Otherwise he might lay the foundations and then find that he cannot afford to finish the work. If a king's army of ten thousand men was preparing to fight an army of twenty thousand men, would the king not consider whether he might win or lose? If defeat was likely, then he would send out messengers to make peace with his enemy.'

'If anyone plans to follow me, he must count the cost of giving up everything to be my disciple.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## Reflection

*As followers of Christ, what are we expected to carry?*

Jesus said that to follow him we would need to carry our own cross through life.

*What do you think this means?*

Jesus invites us to travel along the path that leads us to God's love and his kingdom. This path is sometimes difficult, and at times we might struggle to follow it. Sometimes the problems and challenges we meet along the way become the cross that we must carry. As disciples of Christ, we are called to accept the challenges of living the Gospel and to realise that, like Jesus himself, we might meet hardship, rejection and suffering because of our faith and love for God.

*Why is it important to count the cost of a project before beginning work?*

Jesus used the example of a man who was planning to build a house. What use would his house be if he could

only afford to complete half of it? His efforts and time would be wasted because he couldn't finish what he had begun.

*Why does Jesus want his disciples to consider the cost of following him?*

To follow Jesus demands complete commitment and dedication. Jesus is quite clear about what he expects from those who choose to follow him, and he understands that many people will not be prepared to accept the challenges and costs of discipleship. As followers of Christ, we must forgive as we are forgiven, serve as Jesus served, and love as Jesus loved. We must be prepared to put our love for God and our neighbour before everything else in our lives, and this demands total unselfishness and dedication.

*When it costs us a great deal in time, energy and commitment to achieve or obtain something we truly want, how do we feel?*

It is very satisfying to achieve success after a great deal of effort. In the same way, being a follower of Jesus is at times challenging and difficult, but we must weigh up whether we feel that the costs of discipleship are worth the rewards.

## Activity

Photocopy an activity sheet for each child to complete.

## Intercessions

As brothers and sisters in one loving family, together let us pray to our heavenly Father:

For the courage to follow Christ and bear witness to his Gospel with our lives.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the courage to follow Christ when it means standing up for what is right.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the courage to follow Christ even when others poke fun at what we believe.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the courage to follow Christ's perfect example of living love and forgiveness.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Knowing that our heavenly Father is listening, in the silence of our hearts let us share our own unspoken prayers with him.

*Silence*

Loving Father,  
may others know and recognise that we are Christians  
by our love for you and for one another,  
as we follow in the footprints of Christ.  
Grant this through Jesus your Son.

**Amen.**

Which two people mentioned by Jesus in today's gospel had to consider different costs?

Use these codes to find the answers!

<div> <div>1p</div> <div>5p</div> <div>£10</div> <div>50p</div> <div>£1</div> <div>10p</div> <div>20p</div> <div>£5</div> </div>									
1p = A	50p = I								
5p = B	£1 = L								
10p = D	£5 = R								
20p = E	£10 = U								

<div> <div></div> <div>0</div> <div>◇</div> <div>👑</div> <div>👑</div> </div>									
👑 = A	👑 = K								
👑 = G	👑 = N								
◇ = I									

Has this builder got everything he needs to build a house?

Count the bags of cement



Count the windows



Count the doors



Count the piles of sand



### BUILDING LIST

4 bags of cement



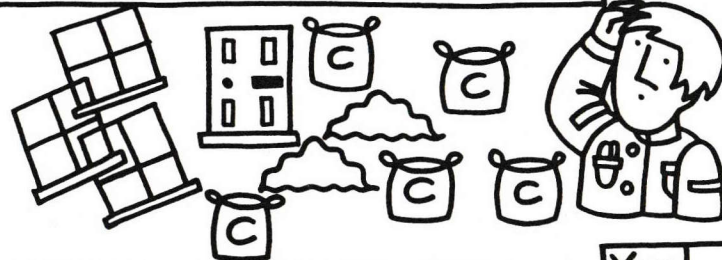
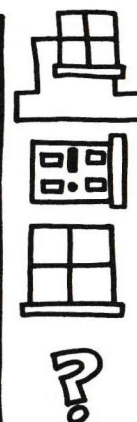
5 windows



2 doors



1 pile of sand



Tick ✓ the answer box

Yes	
No	