### Handout #1.

### Parable of the Sower and Commentary

##### Matthew 13:3-23

And he told them many things in parables, saying: ‘Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!’

Then the disciples came and asked him, ‘Why do you speak to them in parables?’ He answered, ‘To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. The reason I speak to them in parables is that “seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.” With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:

“You will indeed listen, but never understand,
   and you will indeed look, but never perceive.
For this people’s heart has grown dull,
   and their ears are hard of hearing,

 and they have shut their eyes;

 so that they might not look with their eyes,
   and listen with their ears,
 and understand with their heart and turn—
   and I would heal them.”

But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

‘Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.’

##### Reflections by John Shea

(From *The Spiritual Wisdom of the Gospels for Christian Preachers and Teachers*)

The spiritual teacher helps the disciples move into greater understanding of this parable. He interprets the parable in terms of the obstacles to hearing the word. In this sense it is a parable about how to hear Jesus’ teaching in general and the parables in particular.

In the Matthean Jesus’ interpretation the seed is always sown, but its ongoing life is in continual peril. The evil one may immediately steal it away. Or the word will be received enthusiastically, but it will not be pondered and acted upon. Therefore it will not develop roots, and so this person will not be able to withstand trouble and persecution. Or the spiritual word will find itself in unfavorable competition with the cares and wealth of the world. This person will not bear fruit. However, when the word and soil come together completely and effectively, the result is an abundance and an excellence beyond imagination. Although four possible persons are envisioned, it is more realistic to understand each seed as belonging to every person. At one time or another every person loses the word to the evil one, is enthusiastic but not persevering, pursues riches at the expenses of soul, and bears abundant fruit.

### Handout #2.

### Learning to Be a Disciple of Jesus Christ

The objective of this activity is to involve the whole family in discovering the qualities of a disciple of Jesus Christ by exploring Gospel passages and discussing how to live as a disciple today. The format for the activity resembles a game show, where a family member selects a card and follows the instructions on the card. All Scripture passages are on a separate sheet of paper.

There are four types of cards:

1. **Jesus Teaches:** Read a short Gospel passage of Jesus teaching us about following him and discuss as a family how you would live as a disciple today.
2. **Jesus Acts:** Read a short Gospel passage of Jesus living his mission and discuss as a family how you would act like Jesus today.
3. **Jesus Tells a Story:** Read a Gospel parable and discuss as a family what it teaches you about following Jesus.
4. **Did You Know?:** Test your knowledge of the people and events in the Gospels. Pick up a card and ask a family member to answer the question. If they get it wrong, invite the entire family to answer the question. If nobody knows the answer, try a second card.

Place the cards in four piles and read the cards in the following order. Begin with the youngest member in the family or at the table. (Parents can assist younger children by reading the card and the Scripture passage.)

1. Jesus Teaches

2. Did You Know?

3. Jesus Acts

4. Did You Know?

5. Jesus Teaches

6. Did You Know?

7. Jesus Tells a Story

8. Did You Know?

9. Jesus Acts

10. Did You Know?

11. Jesus Teaches

12. Did You Know?

13. Jesus Acts

14. Did You Know?

15. Jesus Tells a Story

16. Did You Know?

17. Jesus Teaches

18. Did You Know?

19. Jesus Acts

20. Did You Know?

21. Jesus Tells a Story

22. Did You Know?

23. Jesus Teaches

24. Did You Know?

After you have finished the discipleship cards take time to develop specific ways your family will live as disciples of Jesus Christ today. Begin by reading Matthew 7:24-27 and the reflection which is on the worksheet, “Living as Disciple Today: Our Family Pledge.”

Take time now to summarize the teachings of Jesus you discovered in the first activity and write them in left column. After you have finished this list, develop specific ways your family can put these teachings into practice.

### Living as Disciple Today: Our Family Pledge

*‘Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!*’ (Matthew 7:24-27)

To live faithfully as a disciple of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves to take the teachings of Jesus and live them each day at home, at school, at work, and in our world. We seek to be the wise family that hears the words of Jesus and acts on them, building our lives on the solid rock of faith in Jesus Christ. (Post your pledge on the refrigerator, table, or wall to remind you of your commitments.)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Jesus teaches us how to live.** | **As family members we will put these teachings into practice by. . .** |
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### Handout #3.

### Learning to Be a Disciple Scripture Passages

##### Jesus Teaches

**Read John 13:34-35.**

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

**Read Luke 6:27, 32.**

“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you . . . If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.”

**Read Matthew 6:12-15 and Matthew 5:9.**

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.
For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

**Read Matthew 7:7-8, 11.**

“Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. . . .your Father in heaven gives good things to those who ask him!

**Read Matthew 25:34-36, 40.**

“Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ . . . ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

##### Jesus Acts

**Read Mark 2:15-17**

And as he sat at dinner in Levi’s house, many tax-collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples—for there were many who followed him. When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax-collectors, they said to his disciples, ‘Why does he eat with tax-collectors and sinners?’ When Jesus heard this, he said to them, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.’

**Read Luke 5:12-13.**

Once, when he was in one of the cities, there was a man covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground and begged him, ‘Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean.’ Then Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, ‘I do choose. Be made clean.’ Immediately the leprosy left him.

**Read John 13:3-5, 12-15.**

And during supper Jesus. . . took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

**Read Luke 8:40-42, 49-55.**

Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. Just then there came a man named Jairus, a leader of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus’ feet and begged him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, who was dying.

While he was still speaking, someone came from the leader’s house to say, ‘Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the teacher any longer.’ When Jesus heard this, he replied, ‘Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be saved.’ When he came to the house, he did not allow anyone to enter with him, except Peter, John, and James, and the child’s father and mother. They were all weeping and wailing for her; but he said, ‘Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping.’ And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and called out, ‘Child, get up!’ Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. Then he directed them to give her something to eat.

**Read Mark 4:35-41.**

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, ‘Let us go across to the other side.’ And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’ He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Peace! Be still!’ Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, ‘Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?’ And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’

##### Jesus Tells a Story

**A Story of a Rich Man. Read Luke 12:16-21.**

Then he told them a parable: ‘The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, “What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?” Then he said, “I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?” So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.’

**A Story of a Good Samaritan. Read Luke 10:29-37.**

… (The Lawyer) asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’ Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, “Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.” Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’

**A Story of a Pharisee and the Tax Collector. Read Luke 18:9-14.**

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, “God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.” But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!” I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.’

### Handout #4.

### Learning to Be a Disciple Cards

##### Jesus Teaches Card 1

What did Jesus teach us about love?

Read John 13:34-35.

Share: Jesus taught us to love one another and ourselves. Jesus said that our love for one another is a sign by which others will know that we are his disciples. Jesus said that we need to love others as we love ourselves and to remember that we are always loved by God.

Discuss: How do we love others the way Jesus taught us?

##### Jesus Teaches Card 2

What did Jesus teach us about how to treat our enemies or people we don’t like?

Read Luke 6:27, 32.

Share: Jesus taught us to love all people, even our enemies, because God loves everyone. We are not to strike back or seek revenge, but to wish good for our enemy. Jesus taught us how to love our enemies when he forgave those who crucified him.

Discuss: How hard is it love people you don’t like or people who don’t like you?

##### Jesus Teaches Card 3

What did Jesus teach us about forgiveness and resolving arguments and disagreements?

Read Matthew 6:12-15 and Matthew 5:9

Share: In the Our Father, Jesus teaches us to forgive one another always. We cannot ask for forgiveness for our own sins unless we are also ready to forgive those who sin against us. In the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches us that disciples are peacemakers.

Discuss: Why is it hard to forgive other people when they hurt us? How does it feel when you do forgive others? How can you be a peacemaker?

##### Jesus Teaches Card 4

What did Jesus teach us about praying?

Read Matthew 7:7-8, 11.

Share: Jesus taught us to pray always and with complete trust in God. Prayer draws us close to the loving, gracious God whom Jesus called “Abba” (Dad or Daddy).

Discuss: When do we prayer as a family? How do we give thanks to God and ask God for what we need?

##### Jesus Teaches Card 5

What did Jesus teach us about serving people in need?

Read Matthew 25:34-36, 40.

Share: Jesus taught us to look around to see people who are in need and then serve them by our actions, such as providing food, clothing, and housing to the poor, visiting those who are sick in hospitals and nursing homes, and similar actions. When we do these things, we meet Jesus in those we serve and draw closer to him.

Discuss: Whom do we need to care for and serve in our community? How can we as a family take action?

##### Jesus Acts Card 1

How did Jesus treat people who were badly treated by other people? Can you recall a story where Jesus treated people with respect?

Read Mark 2:15-17 and Luke 5:12-13.

Share: Jesus calls us to treat all people with respect and dignity, even sinners, tax collectors who cheated people, lepers, and the sick. Jesus ate with sinners and forgave them. Jesus cured lepers who were separated from healthy people. Jesus healed the sick whose sickness was viewed as God’s punishment for their sinfulness.

Discuss: What’s hard about treating all people with respect? Who especially needs our respect in our community or world?

##### Jesus Acts Card 2

How did Jesus show us to serve each other? Can you recall a story where Jesus showed us how to serve?

Read John 13:3-5, 12-15.

Share: Jesus calls us to serve one another, humbly and unselfishly. Jesus gave us an example when he washed the feet of his disciples and told them to wash the feet of others.

Discuss: What did Jesus teach his disciples about serving others? How do you “wash the feet” of others every day?

##### Jesus Acts Card 3

How did Jesus teach us to value and respect human life? Can you recall a story where Jesus showed us how important life is?

Read Luke 8:40-42, 49-55.

Share: Jesus calls us to respect all human life. When he raised Jairus’ daughter from the dead, healed the sick, and cured the lepers, Jesus demonstrated the importance of all life.

Discuss: How can we show our respect for human life from before birth (conception) through old age?

##### Jesus Acts Card 4

How did Jesus teach us to not be afraid and to trust him? Can you recall a story where Jesus taught the disciples to overcome their fear?

Read Mark 4:35-41.

Share: Jesus calmed the storm to teach his disciples that, if they have trust in him, they have no reason to be afraid. Having faith in Jesus means trusting in his teachings and recognizing his presence in our lives. When we know this, we have no reason to be afraid to follow him.

##### Jesus Tells a Story Card 1

A Story of a Rich Man

Read Luke 12:16-21.

Discuss: What is Jesus telling us in this story? What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Share: Jesus challenges us to be grateful for what God gives us and to share our wealth with others. For what are we grateful? What is the wealth that we have to share with others?

##### Jesus Tells a Story Card 2

A Story of a Good Samaritan

Read Luke 10:29-37.

Discuss: What is Jesus telling us in this story? What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Share: Jesus challenges us to open our hearts to everyone, especially people in need. Jesus teaches us that everyone is our neighbor. How does our family serve people in need?

##### Jesus Tells a Story Card 3

A Story of a Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Read Luke 18:9-14.

Discuss: What is Jesus telling us in this story? What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Share: Jesus challenges us to be honest with God and each other and to trust in God. The Pharisee was so filled with his own self-importance that he had no room for God. The tax collector was humble, asking God for forgiveness and trusting in God’s mercy.

##### Did You Know? Card 1

What city was Jesus born in?

Answer: Bethlehem

##### Did You Know? Card 2

Who prepared the way for Jesus and baptized people?

Answer: John the Baptist

##### Did You Know? Card 3

What did Jesus do at the wedding feast of Cana?

Answer: Turned water in wine

##### Did You Know? Card 4

Who were the two sisters who were disciples of Jesus?

Answer: Mary and Martha

##### Did You Know? Card 5

Whom did Jesus raise from the dead?

Answer: Lazarus

##### Did You Know? Card 6

Who was the disciple who said that he didn’t know Jesus?

Answer: Peter

##### Did You Know? Card 7

Who doubted that Jesus had risen from the dead and needed to see Jesus for himself?

Answer: Thomas

##### Did You Know? Card 8

Who was the man who climbed a tree to see Jesus better?

Answer: Zacchaeus

##### Did You Know? Card 9

Who was the first to see the Risen Lord?

Answer: Mary Magdalene

##### Did You Know? Card 10

What prayer did Jesus teach his disciples?

Answer: The Our Father

##### Did You Know? Card 11

When Jesus fed the 5000 people, who gave him five loaves and two fish to help?

Answer: A boy

##### Did You Know? Card 12

Who was the disciple who betrayed Jesus?

Answer: Judas

##### Did You Know? Card 13

Who sentenced Jesus to death?

Pilate, the Roman Governor

##### Did You Know? Card 14

What city was Jesus crucified in?

Answer: Jerusalem

##### Did You Know? Card 15

What city did Jesus grow up in?

Answer: Nazareth

### Handout #5.

### Living as Disciples of Jesus Christ

In this activity you will have an opportunity to explore the teaching and example of Jesus and how they apply to living today as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

##### 1. Exploring the Teaching and Example of Jesus

Your group will receive a set of Discipleship Teaching Scripture passages. Distribute all the readings among the group members. If there are ten people at the table, each person can take one set of readings or two people can share the work for two sets of readings.

Use the following steps to explore the teaching and example of Jesus.

**Step 1**. Read the Gospel passages.

**Step 2.** Answer the four questions on the handout with the Gospel passages and prepare a report for your table group.

* What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?
* What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?
* Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?
* What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school, in your community, and in our nation and world?

**Step 3.** Share a summary of your report with your table group. Summarize highlights of the Gospel passages and share a summary of your responses to the four questions.

**Step 4.** After each report, develop one or two summary statements as a group that complete the question: “Living as a disciple of Jesus Christ today means that we, as young people, are called to . . .” Write this heading at the top of the newsprint sheet.

**Step 5**. After the last report, review the list and add any other items that the group thinks are important to include about living as a disciple today. Then post the newsprint sheets on the wall so that everyone can read the report.

##### 2. Living the Challenge of Discipleship

Take several minutes of quiet time to complete Handout #7: Living the Challenge of Discipleship. Use this time to reflect on how you can live as a disciple in your daily life and what you need to do to follow Jesus more fully.

Examine how you are living the challenge of being a disciple of Jesus today. Then identify specific practices that you can begin now to grow as a disciple, as well as the obstacles to implementing your practices and the supports and resources you have for overcoming these obstacles.

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### Handout #6.

### Discipleship Scripture Passages

#### Teaching 1

**John 13:34-35**

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

**Matthew 22:34-40**

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “’You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

**Luke 6:27, 32-33, 36**

“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you . . . If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. . . Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?

What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school or work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

#### Teaching 2

**Matthew 6:12-15**

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.
For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

**Matthew 5:9**

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

**Matthew 18:21-22**

Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.”

**Matthew 5:21-24**

“You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder’; and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, ‘You fool’, you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?

What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school or work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

#### Teaching 3

**Matthew 7:7-8, 11**

“Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. . . .your Father in heaven gives good things to those who ask him!

**Matthew 6:5-15**

“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. 8Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

“Pray then in this way:
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.’

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?

What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school or work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

#### Teaching 4

**Matthew 25:34-36, 40**

“Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

**Luke 16:19-31**

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.’ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ He said, ‘Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father’s house—for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’ He said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?

What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school or work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

#### Teaching 5

**Mark 10:17-31**

“As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, ‘Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: “You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.” ’ He said to him, ‘Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.’ Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, ‘You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.’ When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, ‘How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!’ And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, ‘Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.’ They were greatly astounded and said to one another, ‘Then who can be saved?’ Jesus looked at them and said, ‘For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.’

Peter began to say to him, ‘Look, we have left everything and followed you.’ Jesus said, ‘Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.’”

**Luke 12:16-21**

“Then he told them a parable: ‘The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, “What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?” Then he said, “I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?” So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.’”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?

What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school or work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

#### Teaching 6

**Mark 2:15-17**

“And as he sat at dinner in Levi’s house, many tax-collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples—for there were many who followed him. When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax-collectors, they said to his disciples, ‘Why does he eat with tax-collectors and sinners?’ When Jesus heard this, he said to them, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.’”

**Luke 5:12-13**

“Once, when he was in one of the cities, there was a man covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground and begged him, ‘Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean.’ Then Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, ‘I do choose. Be made clean.’ Immediately the leprosy left him.”

**Luke 14:12-14**

“He said also to the one who had invited him, ‘When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.’”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

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#### Teaching 7

**John 13:3-5, 12-15**

“And during supper Jesus. . . took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.’”

**Luke 10:29-37**

“… (The Lawyer) asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’ Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, “Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.” Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?

What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school or work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

#### Teaching 8

**Luke 8:40-42, 49-55**

“Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. Just then there came a man named Jairus, a leader of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus’ feet and begged him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, who was dying.

While he was still speaking, someone came from the leader’s house to say, ‘Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the teacher any longer.’ When Jesus heard this, he replied, ‘Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be saved.’ When he came to the house, he did not allow anyone to enter with him, except Peter, John, and James, and the child’s father and mother. They were all weeping and wailing for her; but he said, ‘Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping.’ And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and called out, ‘Child, get up!’ Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. Then he directed them to give her something to eat.”

**John 8:2-11**

Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, ‘Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?’ They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, ‘Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.’ And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ She said, ‘No one, sir.’ And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.’”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?

What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school or work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

#### Teaching 9

**Mark 4:35-41**

“On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, ‘Let us go across to the other side.’ And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’ He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Peace! Be still!’ Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, ‘Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?’ And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’”

**Luke 24:36-49**

“While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, ‘Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.’ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, ‘Have you anything here to eat?’ They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.’ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.’”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?

What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school or work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

#### Teaching 10

**Luke 18:9-14**

“He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, “God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.” But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!” I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.’”

**Mark 10:35-45**

“James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, ‘Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.’ And he said to them, ‘What is it you want me to do for you?’ And they said to him, ‘Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.’ But Jesus said to them, ‘You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?’ They replied, ‘We are able.’ Then Jesus said to them, ‘The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.’

When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, ‘You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.’”

##### Insights

What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?

What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?

Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?

What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at school or work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

### Handout #7.

### Living the Challenge of Discipleship

#### Discipleship in My Life

*How are you living the challenge of being a disciple of Jesus today? Take a moment to reflect on each of these key teachings and rate yourself. Place an asterisk (\*) next to the qualities of discipleship that you want to improve. Conclude by identifying things you can do to grow as a disciple.*

❶ This is too hard to do. ❷ I’ve got a lot of work to do if I’m going to live this.

❸ I’m working to live this. ❹ This is one of my strengths as a disciple.

To love God with all my heart, soul, and mind ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To love other people as much as I love myself ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To love even my enemies ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To forgive others and always to seek reconciliation with them ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To renounce revenge ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To avoid judging and condemning others ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To befriend those whom society looks down upon ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To serve the needs of others, humbly and unselfishly ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To serve the poor and those in need ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To beware of riches and attachment to possessions ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To be just in my dealings with others ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To respect the dignity of all human life ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To pray always and trust in God ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

To trust in Jesus whenever I have doubts and fears ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

One or two ways I am going to grow as a disciple by eliminating something in my life that is getting in the way of following Jesus or by starting a new practice for living my faith are…

What obstacles do I face in starting a new practice for living my faith?

What supports and resources do I have for overcoming these obstacles?

##### A Disciple’s Prayer:

Jesus help me to live as your disciple by….

### Handout #8.

### Discipleship Today (Adult Learning Plan)

‘Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!’

(Matthew 7:24-27)

#### Discipleship in My Life Today

Discipleship involves imitating the pattern of Jesus’ life by openness to God’s will in the service of others.. This gets at the heart of the matter. The intrinsic meaning of discipleship is the notion of “following;” the disciple shapes his or her life on that of the master or mentor. “Follow me”—those two words distill the essence of Christian life.

Obviously “following” or “imitating” Jesus does not mean simply copying the surface details of his life, such as wearing first century garb or becoming an itinerant preacher. Imitating Jesus means that Christians are to shape their own lives in the pattern of Jesus. This is no simple process nor is there only one way of expressing the pattern of Christ’s life in our own. Here is where the authentic disciple becomes a true learner by constantly reflecting on the teaching and example of Jesus and by trying to see their meaning in our everyday lives.

(Donald Senior, “Following Jesus: Discipleship Today”)

Take a moment to reflect on your understanding and practice of discipleship by using the following questions. Then, share your reflections on the two questions with your group.

* What does being a disciple of Jesus Christ mean to you?
* How do you practice discipleship in your daily life?

##### Reflections

#### Jesus’ Vision of Discipleship: His Teaching and Example

Throughout the Gospels Jesus is presenting us with the vision and practices of discipleship. His teaching and example point the way to life lived in relationship with him.

To explore Jesus’ vision and practices of discipleship, distribute the Discipleship Teaching Scripture passages among the group members. If there are ten people at the table, each person takes one set of readings. If there are less than ten people, ask individuals to take an additional set of readings.

Read and reflect on the Gospel passages individually. Reflect on these four questions and prepare your reflections to share with the group.

* What is Jesus telling us about discipleship in these passages?
* What is Jesus asking us to do as disciples?
* Why would it be hard to live out Jesus’ teaching today?
* What would it look like if people actually lived this way in today’s world? What would it look like at home, at work, in your community, and in our nation and world?

Share a summary of your reflections with your table group. Summarize highlights of the Gospel passages and share a summary of your responses to the four questions.

Together as a group discuss the following questions:

* What struck you as significant or even new about discipleship from reading the Gospel passages?
* What do you think is unique about the teaching and insight of Jesus that we find in these Gospel readings?
* The wisdom of Jesus often contrasts with the “wisdom of the world.” Consider Jesus’ teaching on discipleship—love, reconciliation, poverty and riches, and justice (to name a few): How do Jesus’ teachings compare to what we hear and see in our world? What are the biggest challenges in living faithfully as a disciple today?

##### Reflections on Discipleship

In the Gospel passages you explored, we gain insight into what Jesus is asking of us as his disciples. While no summary of Jesus’ teaching on discipleship is complete, here are several summary insights from the Gospel passages.

* Jesus calls us to love one another as a sign by which others will know that we are his disciples. He calls us to love others as we love ourselves and to remember that we are always loved by God. Jesus challenges us to love all people—including our enemies.
* Jesus calls us to forgive one another and always to seek reconciliation with one another. Jesus said that we cannot ask forgiveness for our own sins unless we are also ready to forgive those who sin against us. We should not presume to offer sacrifice to God unless and until we have been reconciled with our brother or sister.
* Jesus calls us to renounce revenge and to avoid judging and condemning others.
* Jesus calls us to avoid self-righteousness, presumption, and resentment toward others. Jesus repudiated the proud Pharisee and the resentful elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son. He condemned those who try to shut the doors of the kingdom of God so that others could not enter it and said the publicans and prostitutes would enter the kingdom before their detractors would.
* Jesus calls us to befriend those whom society looks down upon. Jesus made himself the friend of the outcasts and did not avoid their company.
* Jesus calls us to serve one another, humbly and unselfishly. Jesus gave us an example when he washed the feet of his disciples and challenged us to invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind to the banquet.
* Jesus calls us to serve the poor. Jesus singled out the poor in the beatitudes, insisting that the reign of God will be theirs, as did Mary in her Magnificat: “He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty” (Luke 1:52-53). Jesus’ parable of Lazarus and the rich man is particularly compelling.
* Jesus calls us to beware of riches and the attachment to possessions. Jesus said it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God. He said that those who would be his disciples should be ready to sell all that they have and give it to the poor.
* Jesus calls us to pray always and with complete trust in God. Jesus said that we should pray in complete confidence to God.

As disciples, we are challenged to . . .

* + trust in God's unconditional love, acceptance, and forgiveness.
	+ discover a loving God in prayer.
	+ find meaning and purpose for our lives in a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
	+ be peacemakers and promote reconciliation—working for peace and healing in our relationships, community and world, and resolving conflicts nonviolently.
	+ be good stewards of God's creation—sharing our personal talents and possessions, as well as the resources of the earth.
	+ live a life of simplicity freed from the pressures of materialism and consumerism.
	+ respect the human dignity, worth, and equality of all people—recognizing that all people are created in the image and likeness of God.
	+ work for social justice to ensure that the essential human and material needs of all people are met; work toward a world freed of poverty and oppression of all kinds.
* be compassionate and serve those in need—developing a special sensitivity to human suffering and fragility; engage in actions to respond to those in need.
* develop loving relationships built upon care, compassion, commitment, faithfulness, honesty, and a concern for the other person.

Consider this: What if by some miracle we all began to live this way? Would not our lives be the solution to so many of the problems that beset us in our families, communities, nation, and world?

#### Living as a Disciple of Jesus Today

Take several minutes to examine your life as a disciple using Handout #7. Examine how you are living the challenge of being a disciple of Jesus today. Then identify specific practices that you can begin now to grow as a disciple, as well as the obstacles to implementing your practices, and the supports and resources you have for overcoming these obstacles.

Share several ideas for growth with your group. Give each person time to share his or her ideas without interruptions or discussion.

Conclude by writing a prayer: “Jesus help me to live as your disciple by . . .”

#### Going Deeper

Use the following activities in the coming weeks to learn more about discipleship and how you can grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

##### Week One: Exploring the Teaching and Example of Jesus

Take some time this week to read all of the Gospel passages used in this session:

Teaching 1—Love: John 13:34-35, Matthew 22:34-40, Luke 6:27, 32-33, 6

Teaching 2—Forgiveness: Matthew 6:12-15, Matthew 5:9, Matthew 18:21-22, Matthew 5:21-24

Teaching 3—Prayer: Matthew 7:7-8, 11; Matthew 6:5-15

Teaching 4—Service to the Poor: Matthew 25:34-36, 40; Luke 16:19-31

Teaching 5—Riches and Possessions: Mark 10:17-31, Luke 12: 16-21

Teaching 6—Compassion for the Outcasts: Mark 2:15-17, Luke 5:12-13, Luke 14:12-14

Teaching 7—Servant Lifestyle: John 13:3-5, 12-15; Luke 10:29-37

Teaching 8—Dignity of Life: Luke 8:40-42, 49-55; John 8:2-11

Teaching 9—Trust in Jesus Overcomes Fears: Matthew 4:35-41, Luke 24:36-49

Teaching 10—Humility: Luke 18:9-14, Mark 10:35-45

##### Week Two: Reading Jesus’ Sermons on Discipleship

The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, Chapters 4-6) and The Great Sermon (Luke 6:20-49) reflect the heart and mind of Jesus. They should have a privileged place in our lives as disciples. The Sermon makes four points with utter simplicity. Love everyone, especially those you would ordinarily consider enemies. Claim nothing as your own, but use all you are and all that you have to meet the needs of others. Forgive everyone everything. Judge no one but yourself.

Find a quiet place this week to pray, read the Scriptures, and reflect on how you can live the message of Jesus more fully today. Read the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapters 5-7 and the Great Sermon in Luke 6:20-49.

##### Week Three: Jesus’ Mission – My Mission

Find time this week to reflect on your mission in life. Use the following questions to discover your personal mission. Then shape your responses into a short paragraph or two.

* What do I feel are my greatest strengths? What strengths have others noticed in me?
* What do I deeply enjoy doing?
* Who are the one or two people who’ve made the greatest positive impact on my life? Why have they made such a significant impact?
* What have been the happiest moments of my life? Why were they happy?
* If I had unlimited time and resources for a full week, what would I choose to do?
* What do I enjoy doing for others?
* What are my most important goals in life? What do I hope to accomplish in my life?
* What inspires me? What brings out my passion and my commitment?

Now reflect on Jesus’ mission as found in Luke 4:16-21 and Luke 7:18-22. Can you see the mission of Jesus in your mission? How can you strengthen your mission to reflect the challenge of living as a disciple today?

### Prayer Service

##### Gather

Invite several families, adolescents, and adults to offer their prayers on discipleship.

##### Listen

Choose one of the following readings:

The Mission of the Twelve: Mark 6:7-13 (Fifteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time-B)

OR

Mission of the Seventy: Luke 10:1-12, 17-20 (Fourteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time-C)

##### Respond

Introduce the anointing using the words below or your own words:

At our Baptism we were anointed as disciples of Jesus Christ—to follow Jesus all the days of lives. In the sacrament of Baptism, oil is a sign of being “anointed” by the Holy Spirit, our spiritual source of strength, protection, and healing. Today, we renew our commitment to follow Jesus. Each person will be anointed with oil as a remembrance of our Baptism.

Ask one person in the group to pick up the bowl of oil and anoint the person to his or her right by making the sign of the cross on his or her forehead. Then pass the bowl to the person who has just been anointed and continue in the same fashion around the group.

Play reflective, instrumental music during the anointing.

##### Go Forth

We close with these words from Pope St. John Paul II in his address to young people at the 1996 World Day of Youth:

“How does Jesus send you? He promises neither sword, nor money, nor any of the things which the means of social communications make attractive to people today. He gives you instead grace and truth. He sends you out with the powerful message of his paschal mystery, with the truth of the cross and resurrection. That is all he gives you, and that is all you need.”

(Pope John Paul II, World Youth Day 1996)