

Living the Seasons at Home

June 14 – Sacrifice

Scripture readings

Genesis 18:1–15, (21:1–7)

Psalm 116:1–2, 12–19

Romans 5:1–8

Matthew 9:35—10:8, (9–23) (focus passage for today)

Prayer

- Look through a church directory or a school directory.
- Take turns saying aloud the name of someone from the directory and how they show the love of God to others.
- For example “I thank God for (*Fred*) who shows the love of God to others by (*the way he welcomes us when we come to church*).”
- Remember to include the people in your household.

Interaction

- Find a labyrinth in your area or use the printed finger labyrinth on the last page.
- As you walk or move around the finger labyrinth, you might sing a simple chorus, read verses from a psalm, say a breath prayer, or simply travel quietly.
- Then, share morning tea together and talk about the twists and turns of your life.
- What did you notice while you were walking/listening/tracing the labyrinth?

Reflecting on the word

Read Matthew 9:35—10:9–23 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Jesus Sends Disciples”

Jesus Sends Disciples Based on Matthew 9:35—10:23

It will take a bit of effort for us to picture what the scene was like; it happened long ago, and it is hard for us to imagine what things were like, for they were very different from now. But it may have been a bit like a music festival or sports final – a community event at which everyone from the town or suburb was gathered together.

There was a buzz in the air. Everyone had come out to see Jesus. He had been travelling throughout the territory, he'd been to lots of towns, he'd healed many people and had been telling everyone of the love God has for all of us. As you might imagine, he'd attracted a lot of attention, been the centre of many crowds. We don't know why this crowd was different from any of the others, but it was. There was something about the people gathered in this place that really tugged at Jesus' heartstrings. He felt how lonely and sad they were, somehow knew that they had lost their bearings and were struggling to find a way out of distress and into the joy of life. His immediate desire was to do something to lighten the load they were enduring, for Jesus was someone full of compassion.

"There are not many people who understand the love of God as well as you do," he told the disciples. "You have been travelling with me and have seen how people's lives can be transformed when God enters their hearts. I can't be everywhere, I can't meet with everyone, so I want you to be a part of what I am doing. I want you to travel to the places I can't get to and tell those you meet about God and God's great desire to release people from their suffering and bring them into a life of love and joy. The more of us who do this, the more God's love will spread throughout the world.

"Not everyone will welcome you and receive your message. For some, it will mean they need to change in ways they are unwilling to do. Offer to teach them but do not linger about trying to convince them, for there are others that need you."

So, the disciples went and did as Jesus had asked them. This was the beginning of something extraordinary. More than 2,000 years on from this story we know about Jesus because, ever since, followers of Jesus have travelled away from their safe places into all the regions of the world to tell all those who are feeling lost, lonely, and sad of the friendship and compassionate love of God.

Jesus calls others to follow him and shape a community of good news. This calling includes a big job description:

- Tell or show others the good news of God's love,
- bring healing to those who struggle, and
- do not be afraid.

Wow! So, what does Jesus think about the disciples in order to give them this job description? How might we live this call today?

Idea for enjoying life

- Play a Christ-like version of follow the leader in a home, park or other community area.
- Ask a leader to choose a path and destination that would be appreciated by the person at the end of the line, such as a baby swing if the last person is a toddler or a coffee shop if the last person is a caffeine-loving adult.
- Once you reach the destination, the end person slides to the front to become the new leader.
- Or talk about some imaginary journeys to places where others in the group with you might like to go
- How might this be like following Jesus?

Thought to take with you

Consider sending one another off for the day with this blessing:

“(Name), you’ve been named for a purpose; go and live for God.”



Finger labyrinth

Instructions copied from page 1

- As you walk or move around the finger labyrinth, you might sing a simple chorus, read verses from a psalm, say a breath prayer, or simply travel quietly.
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