

# St. Joseph's *Children's Liturgy of the Word*

September 2023 (Year A)



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St. Joseph is the patron saint of the family, and the family is the “domestic Church.” These sheets were developed to support my parish of St. Joseph in Great Malvern, Worcestershire, but they are now used by parishes and schools not just in the

UK, but some are sent to contacts abroad as well. As always, feedback and suggestions are most welcome.

***Sunday Mass is the cornerstone of our week; These resources are designed to be used in a family setting or in Children's Liturgy of the Word at Mass, or in the classroom. Please make them your own and feel free to pass them on for free.***

## The new academic year.

In many ways, September is more like a new year than January. The children go back to school and many activities in the parish re-start or have new beginnings, such as sacramental programmes. Those of you who have taken a break from the Children's Liturgy of the Word may be getting going again, possibly with new members of the team on board. Please as ever feel free to share these resources with others – I put a lot of effort into them and its great that they are being used!

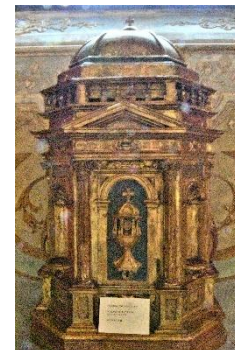
This edition completed the three years that I have been creating these resources, so from oct onwards I will be re-working the old ones. If you have been using these since the beginning and have any suggestions to make, please let me know in good time!

***There are Four Dimensions of our Faith, and the activities all reflect one or more of each of these dimensions.***

Professing the faith (speaking about it and learning the faith)

Celebrating our faith in the liturgy and the sacraments

C17 Tabernacle, Basilica of St. Ambrose © Carol Ann Harnett



Living the faith in Christ (making choices by the grace of Jesus Christ)

A prayer-filled life where the Our Father takes centre stage



In September we celebrate the triumph of the Cross. This lovely image has Christ within an eight-pointed star – eight points to indicate the day of creation and the day of re-creation – Easter Sunday. Every Sunday is both the first and the eighth day. This is why Sunday is so special – we are re-created in Christ!

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## Gospel for 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Year A

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2023

### Matthew 16:21-27

Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. 'Heaven preserve you, Lord;' he said 'this must not happen to you.' But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because the way you think is not God's way but man's.'

Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it. What, then, will a man gain if he wins the whole world and ruins his life? Or what has a man to offer in exchange for his life?

'For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and, when he does, he will reward each one according to his behaviour.'

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

## Children's liturgy of the word for this week

### Discussion on the Gospel



- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

*Yet again we are being reminded that we have to pick up our cross and follow Jesus. It's not an easy concept for us as adults and even harder for little children to understand. Some of these questions repeat what was asked in July, but two months is a long time in a small child's memory! This time we end with the prayer to the Holy Spirit which is worth encouraging older children to learn.*

**Q: St. Peter had just answered Jesus' question as to who He is and Jesus had said well done to him. But now Jesus is telling His disciples that He's on His way to Jerusalem to die on the cross. What did St. Peter say to Jesus?** (A: Lord, this must not happen to you.)

**Q: St. Peter thinks that because Jesus is the Messiah who is going to save His people then He needs to go to Jerusalem and reign as a king there. But Jesus tells St. Peter off because this is not what is going to happen. What will happen to Jesus in Jerusalem?** (A: He will die on the cross.)

**Q: Jesus says that we have to take up our cross and follow Him. What does that mean?** (A: We have to accept difficult things in life.)

**Q: What might our "crosses" be/what is difficult to do?** (A: Open.)

**Q: When we have to do difficult things, the Holy Spirit helps us to be strong as He fills us with His grace. After Jesus died on the Cross and rose again, He met the disciples several times and said that he's send them His Holy Spirit to help them to tell everyone about Him. When did the Apostles receive the Holy Spirit?** (A: Pentecost.)

**Q: We first receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptised and so we can ask the Holy Spirit to help us when we have to do difficult things. Let's finish with this famous prayer to the Holy Spirit.** (On the next page.)



A Prayer to learn and say when we  
have to do difficult things.



Come, Holy Spirit,

fill the hearts of your  
faithful.

And kindle in them the fire  
of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and  
they shall be created.

And you will renew the face  
of the earth.





## Children's liturgy of the word for this week

Gospel for 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  
Year A

10<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Matthew 18:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you: the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain any charge. But if he refuses to listen to these, report it to the community; and if he refuses to listen to the community, treat him like a pagan or a tax collector.

'I tell you solemnly, whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.

'I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.'

*The Gospel of the Lord*

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

### Discussion on the Gospel

- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

*There are a series of instructions here, all important. The first is about sorting out arguments between ourselves as amicably as much as possible. The loosing and binding is about the authority of the Church to forgive sins, the teaching on agreement in prayer, encourages us to pray together for things and finally that when we meet together in Christ, He is with us. This is what we will focus on.*

**Q: Jesus ends His teaching by saying that where two or three are gathered in His name, He is there with them. What does "gather" mean?** (A: Collected together.)

**Q: That means that because we are collected together, Jesus is here with us right now! When we were baptised, who were we joined to?** (A: Jesus.)

**Q: This is why Jesus hears us when we pray, because He is right here with us all the time. When we come to Mass, Jesus is with us in 4 very special ways. What are they?** (A: In everyone gathered (collected) together; in Holy Communion; in the readings which are Jesus speaking to us, especially the Gospel; and in the person of the priest. The priest is Jesus for us at Mass.)

**Q: What do we do when we come into the church?** (A: Make the Sign of the Cross with holy water and genuflect [go down on one knee] in front of the tabernacle.)

**Q: What is the tabernacle?** (A: The box behind the altar [if it's in a different place in your church, then say where it is] where the Blessed Sacrament is.)

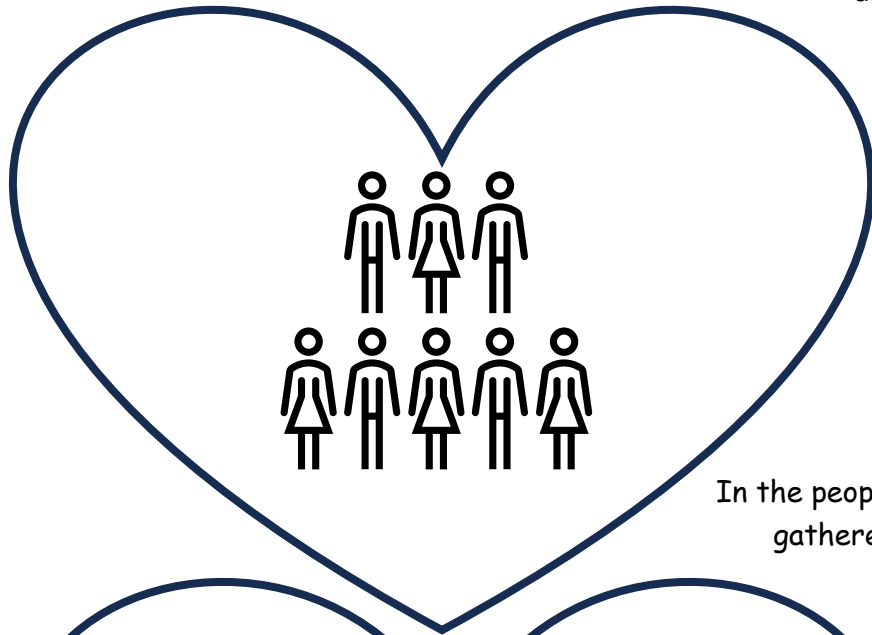
**Q: What is the Blessed Sacrament?** (A: The bread which has become Jesus during Mass.)

**Q: When people come back from receiving Jesus in Holy Communion, Jesus is in them – they are like tabernacles for a few minutes. We need to let them have a few moments to pray in silence and enjoy being even closer to Jesus than usual. If we have not made our First Holy Communion, what can we do at communion time?** (A: We can kneel quietly and look at the tabernacle and tell Jesus that we love Him and ask Him to be close to us as.)

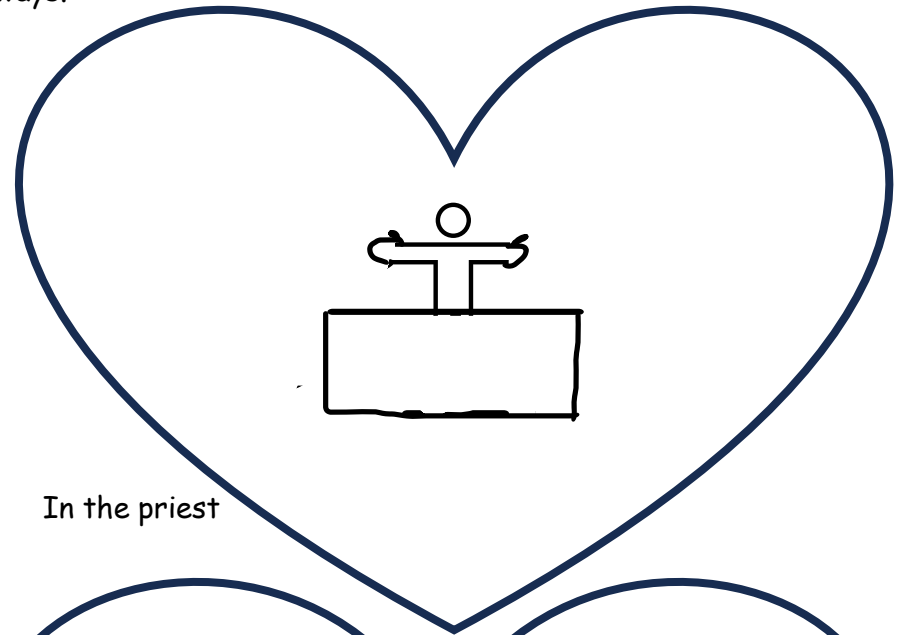
**Q: Let's finish by asking Jesus to be really close to us. Shut your eyes and imagine that you are looking at Jesus... see Him smile at you... hear Him call your name... hear Him tell you that He loves you... feel His love running through you... tell Him that you love Him too... feel His peace in your heart.... And when you are ready, come back to the room.**

# Jesus is with us in these four ways at Mass:

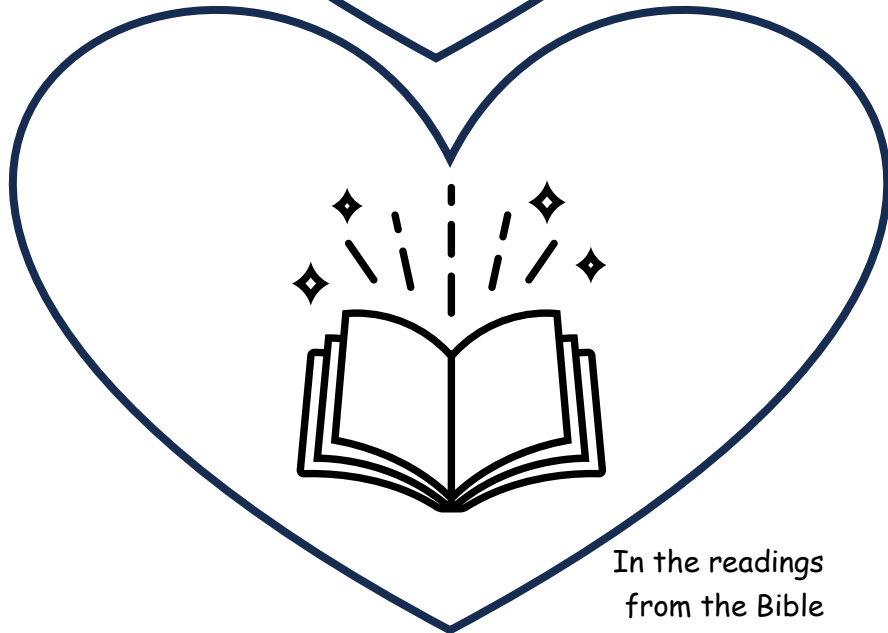
Either colour in these pictures or draw Jesus behind each of these scenes to remind you that Jesus is here with us at Mass in these different ways.



In the people gathered



In the priest



In the readings from the Bible



In Holy Communion

## Children's liturgy of the word for this week



### Gospel for 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time Year A

17<sup>th</sup> September 2023

#### Matthew 18:21-35

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.'

'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents (pounds); but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time" he said, "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; (a couple of pounds) and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me" he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'

The Gospel of the Lord: R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

### Discussion on the Gospel

Again, we have a well-known parable today. Forgiveness is a key Christian attitude, yet it is not easy. Only with God's grace can we truly forgive one another. But Jesus is stressing that forgiveness is important and that we need to keep on forgiving people again and again. It may be more helpful to the children to use "pounds" in the retelling of the Gospel.

**Q: What did St. Peter ask Jesus?** (A: How many times he must forgive someone.)

**Q: What was Jesus's response?** (A: 70 X 7.)

**Q: How much did the first servant owe?** (A: 10,000 talents [pounds].)

**Q: What was the king's reaction to the servant's plea for mercy?** (A: He cancelled the debt [maybe explain what this means to the children].)

**Q: What happened next?** (A: The servant met another servant who owed Him money, but he refused to cancel his fellow servant's debt.)

**Q: Because the first servant's huge debt was cancelled, what should he have done for the second servant?** (A: He should have cancelled that debt too.)

**Q: When we pray the *Our Father*, we ask God to forgive us our trespasses [sins]... how and when?** (A: **As** [i.e. in the same way that] we forgive those who trespass [sin] against us.)

**Q: So, we are asking God to forgive us in the same way that we forgive others who hurt us. Let's think of a way we can forgive people. Who has had an argument with a brother or sister or a friend? We can be really cross with them, but let's do this... Close your eyes and think about a time when you had an argument or fought with someone... Now in your heart, ask Jesus to help you to forgive... now in your mind, see that person who upset you... now see Jesus giving them a big hug. He loves them too don't forget. Now feel Jesus saying "I love you" to you.**

**Here is the Our Father to colour in and put up. Note the line about asking God to forgive us in the same way that we forgive other people.**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our  
trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass  
against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil, Amen.**

## Children's liturgy of the word for this week



### Gospel for 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time Year A

24<sup>th</sup> September 2023

#### Matthew 20:1-16

##### Why be envious because I am generous?

Jesus said to his disciples: "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius (10p) a day, and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing round, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us" they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. "The men who came last" they said "have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat." He answered one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.'

The Gospel of the Lord: R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

### Discussion on the Gospel

*Children have a strong sense of justice and would quickly see that the landowner seems to be treating his workers unfairly. It may be worth acting this out – e.g. agreeing to give 1 reward (a small token or mini certificate) to everyone who helps with an activity. Keep asking more children to join in and then say, "who helped with the activity?" – those who did, put their hands up and you give each of them their token. This will show that the landowner is not being mean, but being generous to those who could only help for a short time.*

**Q: What did landowner agree to pay anyone who worked for him?**

(A: 1 denarius a day. You could add that this was a generous amount as the normal rate was ½ denarius a day.)

**Q: What did those who were able to start in the morning earn?** (A: 1 denarius.)

**Q: How much did the landowner pay those who had had no work and only started in the evening?** (A: 1 denarius)

**Q: Jesus is telling this parable to show that God is generous and that everyone who says yes to His invitation is welcome in heaven. We are lucky because we know about Jesus now, but not everyone does. Who do you know who does not know Jesus, or who ignores Him calling?** (A: Open.)

**Q: In the Bible Jesus invites people to follow Him a number of times. Can anyone remember any of these times?** (A: Open, e.g. to the disciples.)

**Q: Because we are baptised into Jesus, we need to invite people to follow Jesus, just as the Apostles did after Jesus ascended into heaven. What can we say to our friends about Jesus?** (A: Open.)

*We could make invitation cards to give to people to let them know that Jesus is calling them. On the next few pages are two different activities. For younger children basic quotes to stick onto cards to decorate/colour in to give away. For older children there are a selection of quotes they can choose to copy/cut out and stick onto cards. May be when the children go back into the church, they could give these cards to other members of the congregation.*



Jesus said, "Be my  
disciple". (Lk. 14:33)

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Jesus said, "Follow me, and I  
will make you become fishers  
of men." And immediately  
they left their nets and  
followed him. (Mk. 1:16-18)

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And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Mt. 4:19)

While walking by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. and Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. (Mt. 4:18-20)

Immediately they left their nets and followed him. (Mt. 4:20)

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (Mt. 6:33)

And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead." (Mt. 8:22)

As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and Jesus said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. (Mt. 9:9)

And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Mt. 10:38)

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Mt. 16:24)

Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." (Mt. 19:21)

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." (Jn. 1:43)

And as Jesus passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and Jesus said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. (Mk. 2:14)

Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. (Mt. 19:21-22)

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (Mt. 25:34)

And calling the crowd to Him with his disciples, Jesus said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. (Mk. 8:34)

And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." (Mk. 10:21)

Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. (Mk. 1:16-18)

After this Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." (Lk. 5:27)

After this Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." And leaving everything, he rose and followed him. (Lk. 5:27-28)

And Jesus said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. (Lk. 9:23)

To another Jesus said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." (Lk. 9:59)

Jesus said, "Be my disciple". (Lk. 14:33)

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." (Lk. 18:22)

And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that Jesus was doing on the sick. (Jn. 6:2)

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (Jn. 8:12)

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (Jn. 8:31-32)

"Truly, truly, I say to you, ... he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ... and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. (Jn. 10:1-42)

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (Jn. 10:27)

If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honour him. (Jn. 12:26)

And after saying this Jesus said to him, "Follow me." (Jn. 21:19)

Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward." (Jn. 13:36)

Jesus said, "And you know the way to where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" (Jn. 14:1-31)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (Jn. 14:6)

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. (Jn. 15:12)