



Living the Faith – Step 4

Missionary Disciples

Aim

To discover the meaning of discipleship using scripture and tradition and see the effects this has on our everyday lives.

Resources needed

Leaders

- *Come and See notes*
- *PPT laptop and projector or TV*
- *Prayer focus items*
- *Bible or Scripture Texts*
- *Songs*
- *Large sheets of paper, pens*

For Young People

- *Journals*

Prayer Focus

Green Cloth – *Ordinary time*

Candle – *three wick, white, cream or green*

White cloth – *symbol of being clothed in Christ at our Baptism*

Symbols: *Priest Prophet & King*

Dove of Peace - *cut outs for each person*

Catechism – *the wisdom and tradition of the Church*

Liturgical Link

In the dismissal at the end of every Mass, all present are sent out to preach the Gospel, which is our role as a disciple.

Overview

- The power of three
- Discipleship
- The three-fold Mission of Jesus: the way, the truth and the life
- Living the Mission today
- Prayerful Reflection

Preparation by Catechists

- *Familiarity with content and resources*
- *Be ready to share experiences and opportunities for exercising ministry*
- *Pray for the young people and leaders*

Scripture Passages

- Heb 1:1-3 Priest, Prophet, King
- Jn 14:1-14 Last address part 1a

Tenets of Faith (Faith Formation)

- Three Persons, one God
- We are Missionary Disciples
- Jesus the way, truth and life
- The role of Priest, Prophet and King

Gathering

- **Welcome and Overview:**
 - Thank the young people for coming back.
 - Give a brief reminder of the key points from the last gathering.
 - Offer an overview and the aim for this fourth step
- **Introductory activity - *Three into one***
 - The last step involved identification of gifts. Today we think about ourselves as being more than might appear at first glance.
 - Invite group members to join with others who have the same eye colour.
 - Group members look at the similarities and differences in the actual eye colour, and in the rest of their colouring, skin, hair, freckles etc.
 - Now invite group members to team up with anyone whose hand is a similar size to theirs.
 - They then compare, finger and nail length, width to see how similar they are.
 - Now invite the group to find someone whose birthday is the same month as theirs, compare the dates, and the year of birth.
- Bring the group back together and ask if there seemed to be more similarities or differences in the three different matches.
 - Also ask if any of the three items; eye colour, hand size, birth month could be regarded as helping define them as a person?

FF - The activity highlights how unique each individual is, despite the fact that we have many things in common. It also helps to show how multi-dimensional we all are. Our physical characteristics can be seen by others, but there are lots of aspects of our character and life that can only be discovered through being in a relationship.

- Much of who we are remains a mystery to others until we spend a long time getting to know and sharing different experiences with them.
- None of the many different aspects of our being can ever define us and while some are of greater importance than others, none take away from the other aspects either. It is the spirit within us and our relationship with Jesus and the Father, that help us to appreciate and make good use of the difference aspects of ourselves.

FF - One of the great truths, and mysteries of our faith is our belief in the Trinity – three persons on one God. The three wick candle symbolises the Trinity. Representing light, candles are a sign of Christ's presence, the three wick candle reminds us that Jesus, the Father and the Spirit, though represented here as three flames, are indeed one, as is the candle, the perfect unity.

- The only way we can deepen our understanding of the mystery of the trinity is by strengthening our relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, this we do through prayer and reflection, both of which are necessary if we are to fulfil our role as disciples.
- Our opening prayer acknowledges this and the truth about the eternal nature of God.

Opening Prayer

- **Prayer focus:** refer to other items and their significance here and as appropriate later

Prayerful acknowledgement: adapted from *A Wee Worship Group*, Wild Goose Publication

Leader In the beginning before time, before people, before the world began,

All God was.

Leader Here and now among us, beside us, enlisting the people of earth for the purposes of heaven,

All God is.

Leader In the future, when we have turned to dust and all we know has found its fulfilment,

All God will be.

Leader Not denying the world, but delighting in it, not condemning the world, but redeeming it, through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit,

All God was, God is, God will be.

Song: Trinity Song: Father we adore you <https://youtu.be/wMp5Cfku7R4> sing along (words also in the any step resources)

Missionary Disciples

- **Activity: What is Discipleship?** At the start of this journey we explored the notion of Missionary Discipleship. Hopefully over time appreciation of this has grown.
 - In pairs ask the young people to share their understanding of the term and what it means for baptised Christians today?
 - Invite general sharing from the group and help to clarify.

FF

- Being a disciple of Jesus is not an easy task, especially in a world that is so focused on materialism and the generation of personal wealth. Graces we receive from the Holy Spirit, the Sacraments, our connection with scripture and the Church Community help us to overcome the difficulties.
- The mission of the Church is to make God's love known through the message of the Gospel; the Good News that Jesus restored the relationship between God and humanity, to secure the promise of eternal life.
- Followers of Jesus are called to be disciples, the people who continue Jesus mission.
- The Church has long since referred to the baptised as Disciples and Missionaries, more recently Pope Francis, in 'The Joy of the Gospel' uses the term Missionary Disciple.
- Being a disciple is a challenge. To the best of our ability, each of us must help to promote inclusion and equality for all, just as Jesus did, even though we know our words and actions might be unpopular with some and seem at odds with much of society. Such is the role of a Missionary Disciple today.

Scripture and Reflection

- **The Mission of Jesus –**

The Mission of Jesus was to make God's love known to the world, this mission had three main areas of focus: that of priest, prophet and king. The Church believes that all the baptised share responsibility for continuing this three-fold mission.

*“The Christian faithful, incorporated into Christ by their Baptism and made members of God's People, share in Christ's threefold office as **priest, prophet, and king**. They are called to exercise God's mission for his Church according to their state (Canon 204).”*

Activity – Priest, Prophet and King: Divide the group into three and give each a large sheet of paper with one of the three words priest, prophet and King. Ask each group to try to identify:

- ways in which the word is used in society today
- any roles and responsibilities linked to the word
- bring the group together to share what they have identified under each heading, allow for comment or question and show how these relate to the mission of Jesus Mission we share.

- **Hebrews 1:1-3** While there are plenty of references to Christ as Priest, Prophet and King in both the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, this short passage from St Paul identifies all three together.

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,

2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

FF - Priest: Jesus death and resurrection restored the link between the divine and human state.

Prophet: as prophet, Jesus speaks and embodies the divine truth

King: as king, Jesus leads us on the right path, giving guidance to all human projects

A simple way of understanding this is by remembering Jesus saying, I am the way,(as king), the truth, (as prophet) and the life, (as priest).

Adapted from Catholic News Agency article by Bishop Robert Barron 2014

- The Church believes baptism to be far more than a sign of belonging to the Church.
- Through baptism we become one with Christ, and so share in his mission.
- Let us consider what that means.

Going Deeper

- **Living the Mission today**

to help us explore what this mission looks like let us recall some of the words Jesus spoke to the disciples before the last supper.

- In **John 14:1-14** Jesus tells the disciples he is the way the truth and the life.
- How might we find practical ways to be the way, the truth and the life?

- **The Way:** The leadership role; God is the Creator of all things and we are called to continue that work by respecting God, each other, and all created things on the earth. Being an example to others.

Ponder: (use journals to jot down responses)

- What are the ways I show respect to God and creation?
- How might the way I live help people to know me as a Christian?
- Amongst siblings, younger relatives or neighbours how do I give good example?
- For each of the above think of one practical way you can improve being **the Way**

- **The Truth:** The prophetic role calls us to be true to our faith and live by it. This may bring us into conflict with others at times, as speaking the truth involves saying things others will not like. For example, questioning the words, motives or actions of others, or openly challenging them.

Ponder: (use journals to jot down responses and be ready to share with others)

- Am I generally a truthful person?
- How willing am I to speak up if I see, or hear, another do something I know to be wrong?
- Would I find that easier to challenge a family member, a friend or a stranger?
- Could I be brave enough to challenge a person in authority, if I really felt what they were saying or doing was wrong?
- For each of the above think of one practical way you can work at being **the Truth**

- **The Life:** The priestly role is about service. Just as Christ came to serve, not to be served, so too must we serve. Jesus is a bridge builder: a term used in ancient Roman times to describe the role of the **Priest**. Like Jesus we must recognise the needs of others and support them as best we can. In particular, we need to be bridgebuilders where relationships are difficult or have broken down.

Ponder: (use journals to jot down responses)

- How observant am I? Do I easily notice when family members and friends are in need?
- Is my initial response to try and help, or do I pretend not to see?
- In my current circles are there strained relationships in need of a bridge builder?
- For each of the above think of one practical way you can work at being **the Life**

Invite group members to come back together and each person to share one aspect of their reflection

- FF** - By saying 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life' Jesus assures those who truly believe in him will be able to follow his ways and continue the Mission: – anything they ask in his name will be given.
- Jesus again promises the Disciples the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth that will remain with them and will teach them everything.
 - Jesus also stresses the centrality of love: the disciples must love one another, as the love of the Father has been given to them.

Adapted from the New Testament Nicholas King, Kevin Mayhew Pub

- FF** - To take on the role of priest, prophet and king role the baptised must be in harmony with God.
- Harmony comes from devotion to prayer, reception of the Sacraments and a close relationship with the living Christ. It is in his name our identity, purpose and mission is found.

Closing Prayer

- Gather in a circle / semi-circle around the prayer focus.
 - Have gentle music on in the background.
 - Place the trinity candle in the centre of the group and lay around it small images of a heart (priest), vine leaf, (prophet) crown, (king) – see template in resuources.
 - Invite individuals to sit for a few moments and reflect on the conversations that have taken place.
- Give each person a cut out of a dove, as the song: ***Shalom my friend, Peace Perfect Peace***, or other song is played.
 - Invite everyone to recall, and offer to God, a person or situation where peace is needed. (See 12-15 C&S L the F Step 4 Song *Peace Perfect Peace* and *Any Step Inspirational songs*)
- We bring these prayers together asking God to hear them and help us on the path to holiness:

Together we pray:

Leader Sun, how can I thank you?

All You've warmed my heart and soul. Washed away the cold Moon.
You've made a dreamer out of me.

Leader I can see, and I think I can feel it when you change your face.

All Please forgive me if I turn away, I'm just a sleeper
I know that you watch my dreams. You're my heavenly keeper.

Leader Heavenly keeper, guide and protect me each day.

All As long as I'm breathing, as long as I can move, help me to remain strong.

Leader Heavenly keeper, please forgive me when I turn from you.
All Though you remain ever present, I'm not always so faithful.
Please forgive me when I'm just a sleeper.
I know that you watch my dreams. You're my heavenly keeper.
Leader Glory be to God who made us, to Christ who saved us and to the Holy Spirit
who keeps us in faith.
All As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be word without end. Amen

Closing Remarks and Next Step

- Invite response to the Step 4 gathering
- Living the Faith Step 5 – Continuing God's Creation
- Encourage personal and prayer support of one another and attendance at Mass