

# CELEBRATING AT HOME 13TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The journey begins (Luke 9:51-62)



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#### Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

#### **Amen**

The Lord is here, present among us. We are gathered with the whole Church in this moment of prayer.

#### Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus, you are our only Way. Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are our only Truth. **Christ, have mercy.** 

Lord Jesus, you are Life itself. **Lord, have mercy.** 

#### Scripture Reading (Luke 9:51-62)

As the time drew near for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely took the road for Jerusalem and sent messengers ahead of him.

These set out and they went into a Samaritan village to make preparations for him, but the people would not receive him because he was making for Jerusalem. Seeing this, the disciples James and John said, 'Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to burn them up? But he turned and rebuked them, and they went off to another village.

As they travelled along they met a man on the road who said to him, 'I will follow you wherever you go.' Jesus answered, 'Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.'

Another to whom he said, 'Follow me,' replied, 'Let me go and bury my father first'. But he answered, 'Leave the dead to bury their dead; your duty is to go and spread the news of the Kingdom of God'.

Another said, 'I will follow you, sir, but first let me go and say goodbye to my people at home'. Jesus said to him, 'Once the hand is laid on the plough, no one who looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.'

#### Reflection - The journey begins

Very often in life we know what the right thing to do is, yet we can find it very difficult to do. There is a sense of that in the Gospel reading for today. The very first lines of today's Gospel set the tone of what we will read over the next eleven Sundays about the qualities needed by and the costs involved for those who want to follow lesus.

As the Gospel opens, we are told that Jesus 'resolutely took the road for Jerusalem'. This long journey from Galilee to Jerusalem will be Jesus' final journey. There is a sense of determination. Jesus knows what he must do. I think there is also a sense of reluctance. Just knowing it is the right thing to do does not make it easy to do, as we see in Jesus' encounter with the three would-be disciples in this passage.

And, what happens when we feel we are doing the right thing and get treated badly because of it? Will we act like James and John, wanting to call down fire from heaven to punish the offenders? Or will we follow the way of Jesus and just go 'to another village'? We can be filled with such a sense of righteousness that we turn ourselves into God's avengers, but we are really avenging ourselves.

Jesus speaks so often about non-violence and non-resistance. Most of us find that very challenging. Why shouldn't I strike back against the person who strikes me? Don't I have a right to defend myself? Yet we know that retaliation simply locks us into a continuing cycle of violence and only forgiveness can break that cycle.

It is also worth contemplating the three would-be disciples in this Gospel passage. All seem to have been touched in some way by Jesus and drawn to him. All seem genuine in their desire to follow him. Jesus reply to the first begs the question: are enthusiasm and desire enough? Jesus' reminder that he has 'nowhere to lay his head' seems to say that there has to be a sense of healthy realism in our decision to follow Jesus. Can we really do it? What does it ask of us? Are we prepared to live with the uncertainties?

The other two would-be disciples are also genuine in their desire and intention, 'but first' want to go off

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and fulfil their family obligations. Again, Jesus' reply begs the question about what comes first – family obligations or our relationship with him. This is not an either/or question. When our relationship with Jesus comes first, then all our other relationships find their proper place in our lives. We can't really put our relationship with Jesus 'on hold' while we sort out the rest of our lives.

The key to keeping everything in right relationship is our relationship with Jesus as the centre of our lives and who we are.

#### **Prayers of Intercession**

Continue to strengthen us by your Holy Spirit, so that in the midst of difficulty, pain and suffering we can still be strong witnesses of your love.

Give us the ability to recognise what you ask of us in the situations we face each day.

Broaden our vision and our hope, preserve us from selfishness; help us to serve one another in the freedom of love.

#### Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

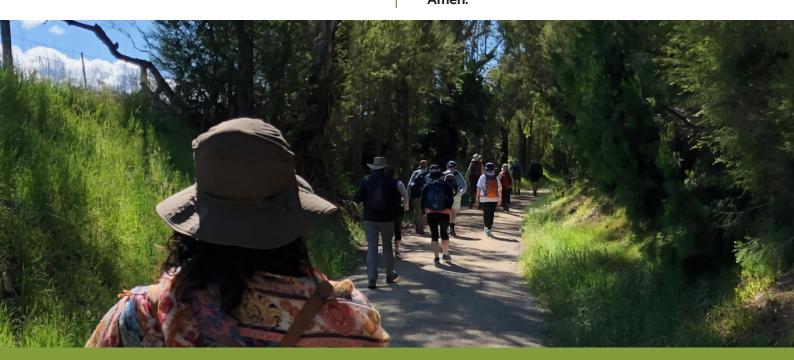
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

#### **Closing Prayer**

Lord, our God, may the clear light of your love fill our lives and be seen and felt in our words and actions, now and always, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### Blessing

May your blessing be with us, O Lord, keeping us safe, and bringing us to life. **Amen.** 





This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when many cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.



