**Encounters of a Lifetime – people who met Jesus**

Assembly 1 – The disciples

*Game*

Simon (or your name) says.

*Talk*

In order to win the game, you had to follow me and do exactly what I said. As soon as you didn’t, you were out. In today’s story we are going to meet some people who had to choose whether or not to follow Jesus.

*Story*

Matthew 4:18-22

*Talk*

Those fishermen decided that it was best to listen to Jesus and follow him. We have to listen and follow lots of different types of people. Let’s play a little game. I will say a type of person like “footballer” and if you think its a good idea to listen and follow that person then put your hand on your head but if you think its a bad idea to follow them, the put your hand on your tummy.

Mum; teacher; someone who gets in trouble in school; policeman; dinner lady; a bully.

If we listen to, and follow, the wrong people then we can get ourselves into trouble.

*Challenge*

Let’s see if this week you can spot who it might be good to listen to and follow, and who it might be bad to follow. I want to see if you can avoid listening to the wrong people. I’ll ask next week if you managed to do it.

*Prayer*

Assembly Two – Simeon and Anna

*Intro*

*Game*

Get 4 volunteers out and get them to sit down after they think a minute has passed. See who is closest.

*Story*

Explain that in our story today, the people had to wait a very long time until they met Jesus.

Anna and Simeon story – Luke 2:21-40

*Activity*

God had promised Simeon and Anna that they wouldn’t die until they had met Jesus. They had to wait a very long time but God didn’t break his promise. Christians believe God is still like that today. You can trust him completely.

Get out a volunteer that trusts you. Tell them that you aren’t going to do anything nasty to them. Tell them you won’t break the egg over their head. You won’t throw a wet sponge at them. You won’t pour baked beans over their head. Last one – squirt with a water pistol. BUT do squirt them.

Well, we’ve already said that God is different – Christians believe that life might not always be easy but you can trust God completely and sometimes that means waiting just like Anna & Simeon.

*Challenge*

Perhaps learning to be more patient is something some of us need to do. Maybe this week you’ll have the opportunity to show how patient you can be.

*Prayer*

Assembly 3 – The Woman at the Well

*Game*

Key Blindfold game. Get out 1 volunteer and sit them on a seat with some keys underneath. Blindfold them. Then get out someone to sneak as quietly as possible to get the keys. The person on the chair has to try and point at where they think the person is. Repeat as many times as you like.

*Story*

Say that in today’s story we are going to meet a woman who spent her life sneaking around because people used to point and stare at her all the time. John 4:5-30

*Talk*

Because Jesus was such a good person and very important, his disciples were very surprised when Jesus started to talk to a woman who had done some really bad things and who was from a country that nobody liked.

But Jesus spent time talking to the lady and after that she completely changed.

*Challenge*

Can you think of anybody that you aren’t friends with or that you don’t like? Can you think of people that don’t have many friends? Your challenge this week is to be like Jesus in the story we just heard.

Can you look out for someone who might be lonely or on their own and spend some time with them?

Can you try and make friends with someone who you have fallen out with?

*Prayer*

Assembly 4 – Mary and Martha

*Game*

Blindfold a volunteer and sit them on a seat at the front. Choose another volunteer and get them to stand anywhere in the hall. They have to make a noise and the blindfolded person has to see if they can find them. Change the volunteers as appropriate.

*Story*

Explain that today’s story is all about 2 women – one who listened and the other who didn’t. Luke 10:38-42

*Talk*

Mary chose to listen to Jesus because she knew that what he was saying was really important and that by listening to him she would learn lots. But Martha was so busy cleaning and tidying that she wasn’t listening to Jesus.

Sometimes we are so busy that we forget to listen. Jesus said to Mary and Martha that listening was really important.

*Challenge*

How good are you at listening? Isn’t it funny that we have 2 ears but only one mouth. That means we should listen twice as much as we talk.

Your challenge this week is to try and listen to people as much as possible. By listening to Jesus, Mary learnt some really important things and if you listen more, you will learn more, you will get to know how people are feeling and you will be able to become a better friend.

*Prayer*

Assembly 5 – James and John

*Game*

Pick out to teams of 4 (different ages in each team). Tell them they are going to do a relay race with a difference. The first person has to put on 1 welly, coat, scarf and hat and then run round the cone and back. When they get back they have to take off the welly and clothes and then the next person puts them on before running. Carry on until they finish.

*Story*

Explain that the team which worked best as a team won the race. In a team nobody is more important than anyone else. Today’s story is about 2 people that were in Jesus’ team but who tried to make themselves really important.

Mark 10:35-45

*Talk*

James and John wanted to be great. They wanted to be the most important and that made the other disciples in the team really mad. Jesus said that being important isn’t about sitting next to him, or about having lots of money or being good at everything. He said that if we want to be great then we have to be servants. That sounds strange but what he means is that we have to put others first and help them.

*Challenge*

If we really want to be great then we have to put ourselves second to everyone else. We have to look at other people and work out how we can help us. Jesus says that makes us great.

Who can you help this week?

Let’s see how many people we can call great next week because they have helped someone.

*Prayer*

Assembly Six – Lazarus

*Recap*

Remind the children of last week's story.

*Game*

Play a game of mummies. Get out 2 teams of 3 volunteers in each. One person of each team will be the mummy and the other 2 will wrap them up. Its probably best not to wrap heads at keystage one age! Whoever looks like the best mummy at the end of the time will win.

*Story*

Explain that in Jesus' time, people used to wrap bodies in strips of cloth when they died a bit like our volunteers did today.

Tell the story of Lazarus – John 11:1-44 (paraphrased!)

*Talk*

Lazarus' sisters knew Jesus was powerful but they didn't realise just how powerful. Christians believe that when we need help, Jesus is powerful enough to help and we just have to ask.

*Challenge*

There’s nothing wrong in asking someone for help if we’re finding something difficult. There are lots of people around who want to help us. So don’t be afraid to ask.

*Prayer*