

Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



FAMILIES RECLAIMING SUNDAY

Read aloud: Jeremiah 20:7-9

Romans 12:1-2

Gospel: Matthew 16:21-27

Poor Vincent! Yesterday was not a great day for him. This morning, Vincent hobbled downstairs on a new pair of crutches. He had broken his ankle trying to do a kick-flip, nose-grind on his new skateboard. The new crutches were just the beginning of his woes.

“Lucy, get me some milk,” Vincent pitifully asked his sister who was in the middle of curling her hair.

“Mary Clare,” he lamented, “I need a shirt from the laundry room, and on the way back upstairs, bring me some toast, okay?”

Both his sisters looked at each other for a minute. Sure, they felt sorry for their brother, but they were in the middle of something, too. Six weeks of Vincent in a leg cast might be too much!

“Vincent,” Mom said, “your sisters are willing to help you out, but let’s be a little nicer and more patient.”

Dad agreed. “That’s true, Son. We all have to adjust. In fact, we all have to leave for Mass a little earlier today to get in place with those new crutches.” Then Dad reminded everyone, “And remember, we have to do our Sabbath Scripture reading before we go!”

Soon everyone was clean and polished, fed, and settled. Dad began reading for his family the Gospel they would hear at Mass, Matthew 15, Verses 21 to 27. When he finished, Lucy was the first one with a question.

“Daddy, how come Jesus said those real sharp words to Peter? I know He likes him!”

Dad smiled at his daughter’s take on the words that Jesus said to Peter, “*Get behind me, Satan!*” (Matthew 16:23a) Those words always brought up a discussion.

“Well, Honey,” Dad said, “Jesus does like Peter—He loves him! Right before this passage in the Bible, Jesus gives Peter the keys to the kingdom and calls him the rock on which He would build His Church. Jesus was kind of scolding him for looking at the suffering and crucifixion through man’s eyes and not God’s. Peter had yet to understand the necessity of the Passion of Jesus.”

Mom looked at Vincent, who appeared to be deep in thought.

"Vincent, what struck you about this Gospel?" Mom asked.

"Well, I was thinking about the suffering part," Vincent said, looking at his leg cast.

"Jesus tells us that every day we have to take up our own cross and follow Him"

"That's right, Son," Mom said. "Many times in life there are situations we find ourselves in that aren't what we want or asked for. Many times we suffer huge hurts. Jesus reminds us again in this Gospel that the route to heaven is paved with the grace of God's will for us, and not necessarily our own choosing."

"And we sometimes have to do things for others and change what we want to do, right?" Mary Clare asked.

"That's right, Mary Clare," Mom said. "A perfect example of that was how you stopped what you were doing awhile ago to get Vincent a shirt from the laundry room. Jesus sees even these little acts of self-sacrifice, and it makes Him happy."

"So, even little things are good?" 4-year-old Hillary asked. "You mean we don't have to do 'huge-ly huge' things?"

Everyone laughed. "Absolutely, Hillary," Dad said. "We can please Jesus by doing small, simple things for other people, and thinking of others first. It is in the 'giving rather than the getting'!"

"And when the bumps of life come along, we accept them as Jesus accepted His cross," Mom added. "These times bring us closer to the Lord."



"Speaking of being 'close to the Lord,' Dad said, "it's time to get out the door for Mass!" Looking at his family, he said, "Any parting thoughts before we leave?"

Vincent's voice rang out. "I have one!" he said. "In today's Gospel, Jesus said something that really stuck with me!"

"What was that, Vincent?" Dad asked him.

"Well . . ." Vincent said with a quick-witted smile. "When Jesus said to come *'follow me'* (See Matthew 16:24) did He mean that with a *cast* and *crutches* too?"

At that, everyone laughed as the family skipped, walked, and yes, even *hobbled* out the door to Mass!