

Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



F A M I L I E S R E C L A I M I N G S U N D A Y

Read aloud: Acts 1:1-11
 Ephesians 4:1-13
Gospel: Mark 16:15-20

Someone had been busy! When the Pauline children woke up this morning, about 40 crosses were taped along the walls, on the furniture, and on the windows. The crosses were made out of construction paper, but they each had a unique feature. Down the middle of each cross were three colored circles. The top one was red, the middle one was yellow, and the bottom one was green. The colors transformed the cross into a stoplight.

"Hmmm!" Vincent was the first to speak. "Now this is interesting! What do you think these crosses mean?"

"I bet it has everything to do with the Gospel reading for this morning!" Lucy answered him.

"You are absolutely right!" Dad exclaimed as he entered the room. "In our Gospel reading for this morning, Jesus commissions His followers and says that certain signs will be with the true believers."

"I get it!" Vincent shouted. "Signs! These crosses must represent the 'certain signs'!"

"I am raising a smart boy!" Dad laughed. "Now, if we are all ready, let's hear our Gospel from Mark, Chapter 16."

The family gathered all around and listened closely as Dad read the passage from Scripture. When he was finished, he told them, "I really like this reading. Jesus gives His followers their 'moving' orders."

"That's right," Mom agreed. "Verse 15 of this reading is called by the Church the 'universal apostolic mandate.' This is Jesus' command to all of us to go into the world and preach the Gospel."

"Moving orders ... stoplights on crosses ... I am starting to see a connection here!" Vincent smiled.

"Brilliant, Vincent!" Dad said. Jesus told the disciples that certain signs will accompany the faithful, and that God would confirm the message of salvation through these signs."

"And what Dad and I have all around the house are signs of the cross. On each of them are the three colors of a stop light. Now, if we were driving and we came upon a green light, what would that mean?"

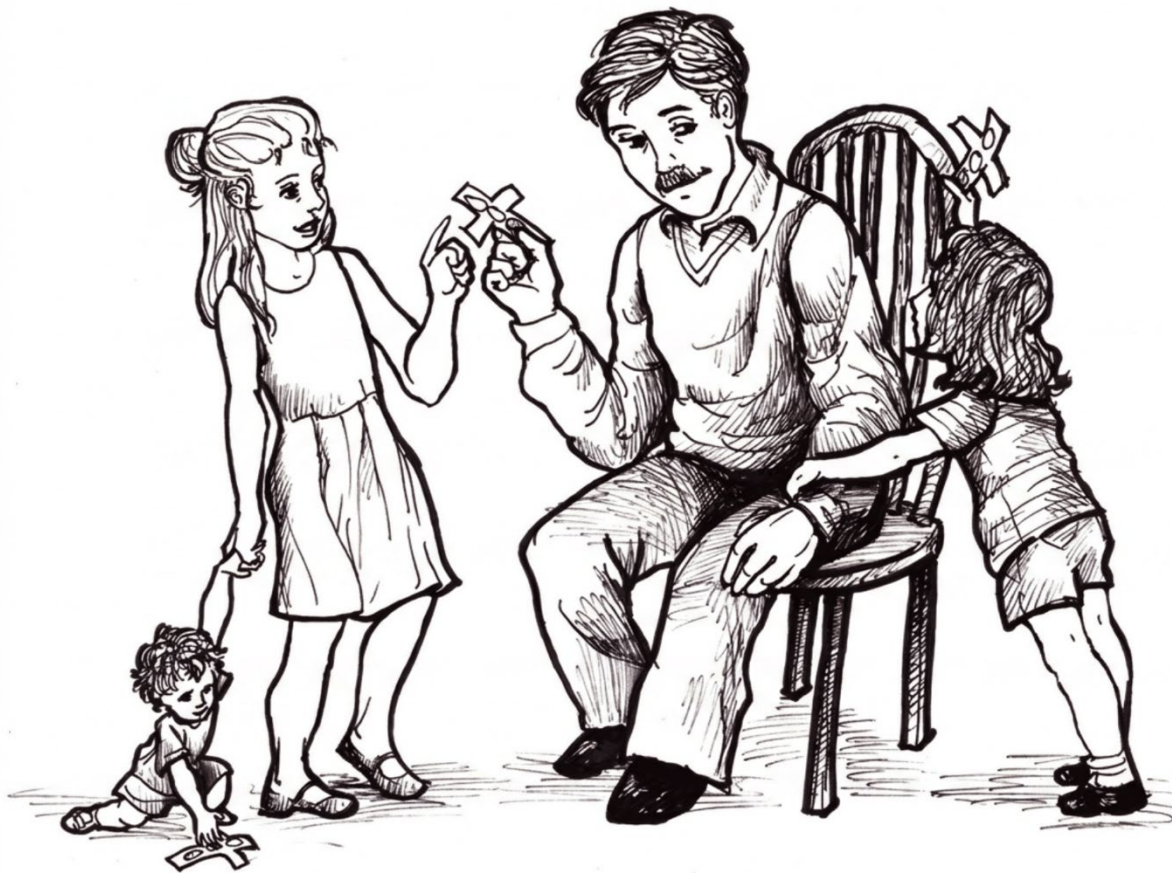
"I know," Lucy answered. "That means GO!"

"Right, Lucy!" Mom told her. "Now, what would it mean in our faith life when Jesus told His followers to GO forth into the world?"

"Well, to proceed and continue the work of God," Mary Clare told her.

"And to do so with energy, enthusiasm, and joy!" Dad added. "Jesus tells us that faith and Baptism are the engines needed for salvation. Powerful, full-throttle, full-speed-ahead signs will accompany us on the road to heaven!"

"Now what would a yellow light mean in our faith life?" Mom asked the kids. Hands shot up.



"I think that a 'yellow light' would be like forgetting about God sometimes and passively leading our lives," Mary Clare offered.

"Exactly, Mary Clare!" Dad responded. "A yellow faith light would be neither go nor stop; neither hot nor cold; neither on nor off. It is like getting lost in traffic trying to reach your destination."

"We don't want that!" Lucy said, shaking her head.

Dad nodded. "That's like taking the long way around, or only telling a few people about God. Jesus wants us to tell *everybody* the Good News. Not just some people, but *all* people."

"So tell me, Lucy, what do you think a red faith light would be?" Dad asked his daughter.

"That would be the worst, Dad!" Lucy told him. "We wouldn't tell anybody about Jesus! Instead we would do bad things like sin!"

"Right!" Dad told Lucy. "A red light in our faith life would be choosing evil and denying God. We wouldn't tell anybody about Jesus or show others how much God loves them!"

"So, when Jesus told His followers to 'Go Forth!' what color light do you think He wanted them to travel by?" Dad asked.

"GREEN! GREEN!" they all shouted.

"That's right!" Mom agreed. "The way to heaven is through the cross with a green light! That is why Dad and I put up all these reminders around the house for you. Always be a 'GREEN LIGHT' for God, and God will bless you as you tell others about Him!"

"And the apostles were green lights, weren't they, Daddy?" little Hillary asked.

Dad had fun with this one. "They were, Hillary! They were not 'yellow' or cowardly as they told others about God, and they did not let anything 'stop' them!"

"So, Kids," Mom concluded, "when we see these crosses with the green, yellow, and red colors on them, let's try to remember to be the 'top' color, or the green color, and go forth and tell everyone about God's love!"

Vincent sighed as he got his jacket on for Mass. "You know, I will never be able to look at a stoplight the same again!"

And with that ingenious comment, the family WENT FORTH to Mass!