

"Follow me"
Sunday Evening Prayer
Readings & Meditations

This is a bit different today.

We have 5 short Bible readings, and 5 mini-meditations to go with them...

Five biblical stories of people meeting Jesus...

Follow Me – the meditations are called.

(inspired by texts by Jan Sutch Pickard in Dandelions and Thistles, Meditations from the Iona Community)

Reading I Mark 1:19-20

Jesus saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

I

"Follow me",
he said – and we did.
We let go the heavy wet nets,
the tough strands of tarred rope:
our strong hands
were empty – we let go
of all we knew how to do,
our livelihood, our identity –
to follow a dream,
a job description
that no one in their senses
would take seriously.
"Follow me",
he said – and we did.

Music - We have come to meet you O God; just as we are we come...

Reading II Mark 2:14

As Jesus was walking along, he saw Levi sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him.

II

"Follow me",
he said – and I did.
Tax collecting never made me popular,
but it put a roof over my head

and bread on my table –
bitter bread, because grabbed and grudged.
He invited me to become
no longer dog in the manger
but host at the feast.
He came right under my roof
sharing my bread
and showing me how to share
with all the rest.
"Follow me",
he said – and I did.

Music - We have come to meet you O God; just as we are we come...

Reading III Mark 7:26-30

She begged Jesus to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, 'Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' But she answered him, 'Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.' Then he said to her, 'For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.' So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

III

"Go", he said.
"Let the children be fed first –
why should the dogs eat their bread?"
But I would not be turned away:
hoping for healing,
hungry for justice,
I stood my ground and argued:
"In God's household
even the dogs are fed."
Seeing my faith,
he told me to go home
and find my daughter healed.
"Go", he said – and I did.

Music - We have come to meet you O God; just as we are we come...

Reading IV Mark 10:21-22

Jesus, looking at the man, loved him and said, 'You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.' When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

IV

"Follow me",
he said, for I had asked him
the next step on a journey
of personal salvation.
He reminded me
of all the good things
I already knew and did.
So nothing was left to do –
I was ready to go.
"Now sell all you have",
he said. "Give it away to the poor".
How could I let go just like that –
lighten the load,
shed my responsibilities,
become someone I did not know?
What would be left?
"Follow me", he said
but with heavy heart
I shook my head.

Music - We have come to meet you O God; just as we are we come...

Reading V Mark 10:50-52

So, throwing off his cloak, Bartimaeus sprang up and came to Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man said to him, 'My teacher, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has made you well.' Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

V

"Come",
he said – and I did,
following his voice
through the crowd on the edge of town.
I needed wait no longer:

my voice had been heard
calling for change,
crying out for a fresh start –
even though it meant
casting off old ways,
no longer the needy person everybody knew.
"Come", he said
and I saw what God could do.
"Your faith has healed you",
he told me. "Now go".
He never said, "Follow me" –
but, as I could see, there was no other way.

Music - We have come to meet you O God; just as we are we come...

Five voices. Five people whose lives were changed.
We all, too, must have heard this call at some point.
Can you remember?
When was it? Where was it... that you heard Jesus? Felt him touch your life.
Made you leave – whatever it was – behind and go on differently?

Follow me as you hear it today – what can it mean for you? Just at this moment,
on this day and in this strange time our world is going through?

Music - We have come to meet you O God; just as we are we come...