

**Comprehensive lesson plan for 8 weeks of *The Chosen*:
Promotion verbiage, facilitation suggestions
& discussion questions**

Discussion questions adapted from *The Chosen 40 days with Jesus Devotional*

Questions: Contact Jessie Hubert, Office of Faith Formation, Diocese of Erie
jhubert@eriercd.org

Week 1--Episode 1—I Have Called You By Name

Poster verbiage for 1st Week: Enter into the story of the ordinary people who surrounded Jesus. Sinners who spent time with the one Man who understood them and would eventually die for them. These are the stories of rebuke and hope, of sin and forgiveness, Yes, their story is ours. You'll meet the people who loved Him, served Him, and followed Him, seeing the Savior through their eyes as you consider who He is and why He came. And the questions meant to help you move forward in your faith are challenging enough to do just that.

Intro talk: As you've heard us say: Every follower of Jesus has a not-so-great "before": A rash, brash fisherman. A pious, fancy-pants religious leader. A thieving, indifferent-to-suffering tax collector. A demon-possessed woman so insignificant that her "before" isn't even recorded and we're left to surmise what it might have been. And yet God calls people in the "before"--when they aren't even aware they're simply broken versions of themselves. God calls people *before* He begins His transformative work of redemption because He sees past the "before" to what He purposed and planned. He sees past the "before" to those He loves enough to call His own.

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Prayer: Thank the Father for knowing your name and calling it-and for identifying you as His. Thank Him for redeeming you from your "before," then ask Him to help you through any remaining challenges.

Reflection Questions:

- What parts of your "before" has God redeemed, and which are you most grateful for?
- How does "I have called you by name, you are mine" impact you today?
- What do you fear, and how does Isaiah 43:1-this declaration made by God to His chosen ones-affect your fear?

Week 2--Episode 2—DELIVERED--Shabbat

Poster Verbiage for 2nd Week: Jesus is looking for people who are willing to run to Him, to fall on their faces, to repent, surrender, and worship because of who He is, and to learn and grow in a faith that remains even when the miracles cease. Jesus knew what was in people's hearts—it's the reason He came. And so, true believers aren't just in it for the miracles; they have been fundamentally and irrevocably changed by Jesus Himself, making relationship with Him the ultimate prize.

Intro talk: We've all been delivered from things. Our mothers delivered us from their wombs. Good explanations delivered us from confusion. Time delivers us from our pasts. It's a continual process, deliverance. It comes in all shapes and forms and ranges from significant events to the familiar moments that slip by quietly. Mary Magdalene knew this as well.

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Prayer: Thank God for the fact that His deliverance allowed for yours, then ask Him for guidance in delivering the news to others.

Reflection Questions:

- Describe what Christ has delivered you from.
- In what ways can you identify with Mary Magdalene?
- What roles has Christ delivered you for?

Week 3—Episode 3--Precious--Jesus and the children

Poster verbiage for 3rd week: Children are simple. They're appropriately awestruck by the world around them. They're wide-eyed and expectant and moldable and trusting. By nature they aren't jaded or judgmental—those qualities come with age, along with self-focus, self-reliance, self-protection, self-promotion and self-praise. On the contrary, children (most of them, anyway) are willing to defer and to receive, to climb into the Savior's lap and be cared for, to be led and loved on. The children approached Jesus in a way we're supposed to emulate.

Intro talk: The children went to Jesus without anything of value to offer Him except their love and excitement to be there. He wanted to spend time with them, hug them, and heal them. He *wanted* to. And we are precious to Jesus too when we recognize our need for His help, when we're willing to defer, to receive, to be led, and to be loved on. We're precious when we come to Jesus with the simple expectation the because of who He is and how He loves, we're welcome, wanted, forgiven, and will be restored.

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Prayer: In the spirit of childlike faith, go ahead and pray some popular children's prayers, but really mean them.

Reflection Questions:

- What are some of the restrictions you've placed on your relationship with Jesus? What hinders you from communing with Him more closely?
- Read Mark 10:14 and Matthew 18: 3-5. What does God see when He looks at you?
- What are some new habits and thought patterns you need to develop in order to approach God in a more precious, faith-like-a-child way?

Week 4—Episode 4—REPENT--The Rock on Which it Is Built

Poster verbiage for 4th week: Jesus was calling for heart change. Radical inward transformation was the price of kingdom admission. Nothing more. Nothing less. And it just so happened that a disastrous night of fishing, followed by a boatload of revelation (pun intended) set the stage for Simon to experience just that.

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Prayer: Pray to God for repentance for as many things as you can think of, but end the prayer with gratitude for His forgiveness.

Reflection Questions:

- Describe your first “Follow Me” moment with Jesus.
- What incident in your life incited radical inward transformation? Would you regard it as a miracle?
- Repentance fosters humility and surrender, so what can you repent of?

Week 5—Episode 5--WORRY--The Wedding Gift

Poster verbiage for 5th week: Jesus could have kicked off His signs and wonders with a parting-of-the-Red-Sea-caliber miracle. Instead, He chose a simpler approach—He changed water into wine because it ran out. It was a relatively minor problem that Jesus was asked to solve. His mother was anxious on behalf of the wedding hosts and wanted Him to step in—so He did. Which means it was during a party to reveal His glory to His disciples for the first time. It was the public triumph over trouble.

Intro talk: Jesus' mother was anxious on behalf of the wedding hosts and wanted Him to step in—and so He did. In doing so, Jesus demonstrated that nothing is inconsequential. Every predicament is an opportunity for divine intervention and continued celebration. We too tend to worry about issues large and small, and Jesus cares about each one, especially because of the opportunity they present—but we have to do our part. Like Mary, we have to ask even with seemingly small matters. Otherwise, we'll read verses about not worrying and worry even more about our inability to cease worrying, rather than seeking and asking so that Jesus can prove Himself triumphant.

Prayer: Ask God to right-size your fears and expectations so that you can see struggles as He sees them—opportunities.

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Reflection Questions:

- Do you struggle with anxiety? What things do you tend to worry about the most and why?
- Jesus used an everyday occasion to reveal His glory. Describe a common event in your life through which He revealed His glory and increased your faith.
- Do you ask for Jesus' help with the seemingly small stuff? Why or why not?

Week 6—Episode 6—Authority—Indescribable Compassion

Poster verbiage for 6th week: What must a person sound like to solicit awe? “He speaks with authority” is such a specific observation. The Jews tried to understand where the authority that oozed out of Jesus came from. *Who granted it? Who taught you how to speak this way? What entitles you to come onto our turf and teach our people?* His answer was simple, but would seal His fate: “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58).

Intro Talk: A leper meets the Master and the best part of the leper's story isn't the healing that took place, though the healing was awesome. And it isn't the faith of the man, though he's an example for us to follow. The best part is when Jesus reached out His hand and touched him. Because Jesus could have just *spoken* the words; instead He moved in and bent low to touch a man who no one had been willing to touch for a very long time. *He touched him before he was clean.* So while the words of healing restored his body, no doubt Jesus' touch restored his soul.

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Post talk: What a wild scene. There was such a mob at the house where Jesus was staying that latecomers couldn't get in, let alone be healed. Here was a guy paralyzed and strapped to a stretcher, and people wouldn't even make way. Tough crowd. They didn't even clear a path when they saw men dragging him onto the roof, a task that couldn't have been quick or smooth. When they finally made it up, they began hacking away at the straw and mud. Christ's mission was to save souls, and healing was useful in demonstrating His power to do that. So for the man who entered the room through the roof, walking was hopefully just the beginning of a lifetime spent following hard after the one who forgave him.

<DISCUSSION OF EPISODE>

Prayer: Thank God for forgiving your sins and then ask Him to give you the same kind of reckless faith and passion as the leper or the friends of the paralytic.

Reflection Questions:

- In order to take such extreme measures, what must the four men carrying their friend have believed about Jesus?

- What keeps you from pursuing Jesus with that kind of passion?
- What's your plan for submitting to Christ's authority?
- What's holding you back from the kind of bold faith the leper had?

Week 7—Episode 7—Trust & Believe—Invitations

Poster Verbiage for 7th Week: The desire to be on top is like an electromagnetic force. And it can seize any one of us, like a thumbtack sucked up by a magnet. So then, think about what it would take to reverse that mighty pull once you'd been seized. What would cause you to willingly give it up, walk away from the money, and lay down the power?

Intro talk: Nicodemus came to Jesus at night, to sit and talk and learn—and hide. John's Gospel doesn't specify that the meeting took place in the dark to keep his fellow Pharisees from seeing it, but Jesus's words implied as much. *Until you're willing to step out of the dark and into the light, you're not with me.* So what is the force that can create such a change in person? Remember that Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea have a prominent role later on...but Nicodemus isn't the only one who is full of questions.

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Post Talk: Jesus didn't see Matthew sitting at his collection booth and think, Oh perfect. I don't have an aggressive numbers guy yet. He wasn't rounding out his team based on their resumes, core competencies, and Myers-Briggs results. In fact, their prior accomplishments were effectively useless, as evidenced by the five thousand folks served fish by the fishermen who had nothing to do with the catch. Jesus didn't need ability. He required availability. Matthew was not chosen based on what he could do. He was called because of what he was willing to give up, which was everything. He chose to take Jesus at His word: "Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 10:39) Matthew's world as he understood it was torn apart. And Nicodemus? He heard the same words as Matthew: "**Follow Me.**" In this version of the story, Nicodemus KNOWS that God resides in Jesus. Nicodemus IS a man of God. Yet his choice is so different from Matthew's.

<DISCUSSION OF EPISODE>

Prayer: Thank God for asking you to follow Him, and that He doesn't value you for what you do, then ask Him to reveal things you can do for Him that don't necessarily require your natural skills.

Reflection Questions:

- If you're brutally honest, do you identify more with pre-Jesus Matthew or disciple Matthew?
- What have been some of the dramatic plot twists the Lord has orchestrated in your life?
- There was so much for Nicodemus to leave behind. We rarely have to risk a lot to follow Jesus. But what are some things you'd have a hard time risking to follow Jesus?

Week 8—Episode 8—Matthew/Samaritan woman/Eden—I am He

Poster Verbiage for 8th week: The adulterous woman...The bleeding woman...The Samaritan woman at the well. When the world chose to abuse, alienate or brutally judge these women, Jesus chose to rescue, restore and redeem them. To ascribe them value. *Because Jesus makes us what we're not.*

Intro talk: The disciples underwent a massive recalibration. Everything they thought they knew about how to live turned upside down. The new kingdom order would be to put others first, to love when people hate, to pray for those who persecute, to lead by serving, to give when it costs, to trust in God's provision no matter how glaring the lack, and to die in order to live. Jesus changed everything, and sharing His love, life and purpose with all people, including the least of these—especially the least of these—became the disciples' sole mission.

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Post Talk: Do you wonder if the Pharisees rang the doorbell? Did they stand on the corner whispering? Did they grumble loudly pretending Jesus couldn't hear them from three feet away? Did they come with a set of questions but change their course when they saw who Jesus was sitting with? Do you wonder if anyone at the table was offended by their question, or if they were so used to being hated and judged that they just didn't care? And what about the woman at the well? "I who speak to you am He." Until that moment, Jesus had only implied His true identity: The actual words—the announcement of God's arrival on Earth—were whispered to the one no one wanted. He knew she'd be there. He knew her name...and her pain...and her need. *She was, in fact, the reason He came*, because from the well of Christ's immense and indiscriminate mercy flows His mission: To rescue and redeem the lost.

<DISCUSSION OF EPISODE>

Prayer: Ask God to completely rid you of any prejudice toward anyone so that you see them as Christ saw the Samaritan woman, and all He chose, then ask Him to help you value living water over physical needs.

Reflection Questions:

- What kind of statement was Jesus making by choosing to announce

Himself to an outcast who was both a Samaritan and a woman?

- How was Jesus different than every other person she'd come across?
How was she expecting to be treated by Him?
- What are the areas of your life where you need a “physician”?