

## SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT MARK 8:31-38

Jesus is Baptized, the Spirit descends on him “like a dove,” and he hears the affirmation: “You are my Son, loved, and pleasing to me.” It appears that he is affirmed and ready for ministry. Yet, immediately the Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness where he must spend 40 days taming the temptations that come with power. Only then is Jesus equipped to proclaim the good news.

And so we too are invited to notice the temptations that are pulling us off course, diverting our energy, and impeding our ability to proclaim the good news.

### **TAKE UP YOUR CROSS**

The Story

Jesus and his friends had just had a long walk down the road as they journeyed to a new place. And on that walk, they were talking about who Jesus was. They disciples told Jesus who other people thought he was, and then Jesus asked the disciples who they thought he was. They said, “The Messiah.” Who is the Messiah? Well, for thousands of years, people hoped the Messiah would come and be a good king and take care of them.

“Hmm,” said Jesus. “OK, but it is not going to be the way you think. I am not going to be a fancy king. In fact, I am going to get killed for what I am telling you. But I will not stay dead. After three days, I will be alive again. So, if you want to be one of my followers, you need to keep remembering to do the things I do.” Jesus said, “If anyone wants to follow me, they have to leave things behind and take up their cross and follow me.”

#### Reflection Questions:

##### Young Children

Can you think of times when following Jesus will:

- make you seem odd to friends at school?
- will cause you to have to make difficult choices?
- invite you to be who you really are, using your gifts and talents?

##### Older Youth

Jesus then tells the crowd that “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”

What do you think he means?

What would it mean to take up our cross and follow Jesus?

## ACTIVITIES

1. **Make a Lenten Cross:** use boards or sticks to form a cross; create holes in the sticks, or use putty to fasten candles to each end of the cross. Light one candle at the start of each remaining week in Lent.
2. **40 items in 40 Days:** Clean the clutter from your life and toss one item away into the bag each day during the days of Lent. Toss the bag on Good Friday.
3. Continue to write in your prayer journal.
4. Write a letter to God

