11th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 9:36-10:8
At that time: When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, but they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest.'

And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. The names of the twelve Apostles are these: first Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying. Give without pay.'

Some things to think about...

- Why do you think Jesus felt sorry for the crowds and wanted to help them?
- What kinds of things did Jesus ask his disciples to do when he sent them out?
- If Jesus sent you to help others today, what is one kind thing you could do this week?

Activity: The Mission Bag
Give each child a small white paper bag labelled "Jesus sends us". Decorate the bag. Give them some blank cards. Invite them in groups to think of things they can do to live out Jesus' mission. For example:

- Listen to someone
- Include someone who is left out
- Pray for someone

Add these to your bag to take home to pick one out every day for the week ahead.

Teacher's Notes
Jesus looked on the crowds with compassion because they were "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." He wanted people to know the love, peace, and healing of God, so he sent his disciples out to continue his work. Jesus gave them authority to heal, help others, and proclaim that the Kingdom of Heaven was near.

Jesus still calls his followers today to share God's love and help bring others closer to him. As we work with Jesus, he works through us to bring hope, healing, peace, and care to the world around us.

Notes: