

Lord, God, help us to hear the voice of your Son through the power of your Holy Spirit, as we think about your words in the bible. Amen.

- CALL OUT FLOCK OF SHEEP AND GIVE MASKS.
- APPOINT ONE PERSON AS JESUS AND GIVE SHEPHERD'S CROOK.
- In our Gospel reading we had a flock of people trying to find out whether Jesus really was the Messiah.
 - They said, *'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.'*
- Jesus told them, *'I have told you'*, and he also said, *'The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me'*.
 - He meant, *'Look at what I say! Look at the miracles I do! ... And decide!'*
- Have you decided? Are you one of Jesus' sheep? Do you belong? How do you know?
- Jesus said, *'My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.'*
 - Does Jesus know you? Does he know your name? Let's see!
- SORT INTO TWO GROUPS DECIDING WHETHER JESUS KNOWS THEIR NAME
- TO FIRST GROUP: He knows you so you must be valuable to him.
- TO SECOND GROUP: Oh dear!
 - Actually I believe we are all created and loved by Jesus – so all valuable. So we are all his sheep.
- But Jesus said, *'My sheep hear my voice.'* He also said, *'they follow me'*.
- We are Jesus' sheep. So we hear his voice. And we follow.
 - How do we hear his voice? How do we follow? Because it's all very well but does it make any difference in daily life?
 - Let's face it. Life can be a bit like a tightrope, like walking across a narrow plank
 - We all have worries and problems. It can be scary! Here are some common ones.
- WALK THE PLANK ONE BY ONE EACH WITH A BIT OF PAPER WITH VARIOUS WORRIES.
 - Anger; Feeling out of control; School; Have I got friends?; The future; Worries and Anxiety; Who can I trust?; I don't understand myself.
- How do you hear Jesus' voice when you are angry, frightened about the future and so on?
- HAND OUT POCKET CARDS
- First page is asking the questions we've just been asking.
- Second page starts to give an answer.
 - How do we hear the voice of Jesus? How do we follow Jesus? And how can Jesus keep us safe so we need not be frightened about all this?
- Remember, Jesus must have felt all this too, except more so. He was a human being. He knew what it felt like to feel worried, cross, alone, out of control. Think how he must have felt when the crowd were all shouting 'Crucify!'
 - He walked the tightrope, the plank of life as well.
 - Except he turned it into a cross
- TURN PLANK INTO CROSS
- The Third page gives four practical things to do that help you to listen to the voice of Jesus that come out of today's readings. Especially when you feel you are walking along a bit of a tightrope of worries and fears and you're worried you'll fall off.
 - First remember, you are valuable to him, He has called you. He knows your name. He loves you. You are as precious as a diamond to him
 - Second, remember you are in a flock with lots of other sheep, so talk about your fears to your Christian friends and pray with them to the shepherd.
 - That's what Tabitha's friends did when they were so upset when she died. And Jesus certainly heard them that time.

- Third, don't worry about making mistakes and getting it wrong. The disciples, Jesus' friends like us, did that all the time.
 - They were far from perfect and Jesus still loved them!
- But try and remember the mistakes and they might help you act differently next time.
- And finally, remember what we said earlier. There is no emotion and fear you are facing that Jesus did not face.
 - So think. What would Jesus do? WWJD? How would he cope? Could you do the same?
- And remember the biblical promise on page Four which we heard in or reading today
 - Jesus was talking about his sheep, he was talking about you and me. He said, '*No one will snatch them out of my hand.*'
 - Isn't that an amazing promise? We're safe. Jesus will always keep us safe. No one will be able to snatch us away.
 - So there's no need to be afraid!
- Of course that doesn't make life straightforward all the time. We're still going to have troubles and temptations.
 - But it does give it meaning and direction.
 - Right at the end of the reading, Jesus said an important thing. He said, '*The Father and I are one.*'
 - In other words, He is the Son of God. He speaks with authority and truth. You can trust him.
 - And finally, after he said this, do you know what happened next?
 - Read the next verse!
 - CHAPTER 10, VERSE 31
 - They picked up stones again to throw at him.
 - Were these people Jesus' sheep? They heard his voice, but did they didn't follow him!
 - What about you?
- Please take the plastic cards home and carry them I your pocket, so the next time you need to hear the voice of Jesus, you will know what to do! Amen.