



On one occasion Jesus said:

"My Father, Lord of heaven and earth,

I am glad that you hid all this from wise and educated people and showed it to ordinary people. Yes, Father, that is what pleased you.

My Father has given me everything, and he is the only one who knows the Son. The only one who truly knows the Father is the Son. But the Son wants to tell others about the Father, so that they can know him too.

If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest. Take the yoke I give you. Put it on your shoulders and learn from me. I am gentle and humble, and you will find rest. This yoke is easy to bear, and this burden is light."



Year A - 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 11:25-30

Jesus carries us



Introduction

- In today's Gospel, Jesus reminds us that he helps us to carry our burdens and we can do hard things when we do them with Jesus.

Message

- In the days of Jesus, oxen were used to work the fields and to carry goods from place to place.
- Sometimes these 'burdens' were particularly heavy and hard. They would have to pull ploughs through the dirt or carry things in carts.
- So, when Jesus said the word 'yoke', that is what the people listening would have imagined (see the picture on the next page).
- There are a few things that the people listening would have known about yokes that we don't really know about today. Here they are:
 - Yokes are made of wood, they are used to yoke two oxen together so that they can work as a team.
 - The yoke is shaped specifically for each animal so that it fits them. It doesn't hurt them, in fact, it rests on their shoulders comfortably.



Discussion

- What have people done for you to make you feel welcome?
- What doesn't make you feel welcome?
- Who are some people in your life that you can welcome?
- Jesus taught us to be his disciple. We are called to do and say the things that Jesus taught. What does that mean?
For example:
 - when something makes us feel bad, Jesus wants us to share our feelings and ask for help
 - when we have a job to do, Jesus wants us to do it the best we can
 - when we have a hard choice to make, Jesus wants us to do the right thing in a loving way
- Just like a 'yoke' makes an oxen go a certain way, Jesus wants us to 'go' a certain way too when we are his disciple. This is what Jesus means about his yoke.
- But remember, the oxen never work alone. And for us, Jesus says that he will carry the loads with us. When we are 'yoked' to Jesus, he always does the 'heavy lifting' for us!