

Short Talk

(SHT184a)

Jesus the refugee

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “Jesus the refugee”

- Aim of Short talk:** To teach that when Jesus was a child, He was a refugee and to encourage people to welcome and show kindness to any refugees they come across in their lives.
- Use of Short talk:** This is a short All Age talk picking out one issue from the Lectionary Gospel reading of the Sunday main service. The talk stands alone and assumes that the Gospel Bible reading may not yet have been read to the congregation. It could be used for example, for the whole congregation before the children go out to their age specific groups, leaving the adults with a full sermon later.
- Main themes:** Jesus, Refugee, Persecution
- Biblical references:** Matthew 2:13-23
- Lectionary:** Year A – The 2nd Sunday of Christmas - 2023
- Props:** You need a small suitcase and a table that you can lay it upon. You also need the following props that you will pack into the suitcase hidden away from view:
- Passport + piece of paper to act as a “ticket”
 - A couple of t-shirts, pair of shorts, pair of sandals
 - Wash bag, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, deodorant
 - Sun cream
 - Box of paracetamol
 - Phrase book
 - Money (preferably that from a different country)
 - Packet of biscuits

.....

I want you to imagine for a moment that next week I am going to travel to hot and sunny Barbados for a holiday that I booked a few months ago.

- I have got my suitcase down from the loft! Here it is. (*Produce suitcase. Open it and place on table in full view of the congregation*)
- Now I wonder what I need to pack.

The first thing I will need is my passport. (*Produce passport*)

- I made sure it was up to date last month! (*Put passport into case*)
- That will allow me entry into the country of Barbados.
- I will also need my tickets for travelling. (*Put piece of paper into inside pocket of your case*)

Now, what clothes do you think I should take for a hot country? (*Receive responses*)

So I will pack a nice clean pair of shorts, a few clean t-shirts and a pair of sandals; *(Pack these items into your case)* clothes that will keep me cool in the hot sun.

What should I put into my wash bag? *(Hold up wash bag and receive responses)*

- In goes my toothbrush and toothpaste, some soap and deodorant *(Pack these items into your case)*

As Barbados is a very hot country, what might I need to protect my skin from the sun? *(Receive responses)*

- In goes the sun cream and also some paracetamol in case I get a headache. *(Pack these items into your case)*

I will also pack a phrase book to help me understand the Bajan dialect that is often spoken. *(Pack phrase book into your case)*

- Last week I changed my money into Barbados Dollars so that I can buy all that I need while I am out there.....so in that goes. *(Pack money into your case)*

The food in other countries is often quite different from what we are used to eating, so I am going to take a packet of my favourite biscuits to keep me going. *(Pack biscuits into your case)*

Now, have I forgotten anything? *(Receive responses, adlib around the ideas, then shut the case and pick it up)*

There we are.....I am all ready to go on holiday next week with everything I need.

- It takes time to prepare to go on holiday doesn't it?

I want you to imagine for a moment that you are suddenly woken up one night to be told by a friend to get up and leave your home immediately because your life is in danger.

- Not only do you have to leave your home, but you need to move to another country to be safe.

Now you wouldn't have time to pack a suitcase like we have just done.

- You would have to grab your passport and leave your home with simply the clothes you are wearing.
- You might have time to quickly pick up one or two of your precious possessions but no more than that, because your life is in real danger.
- What do you think that would be like? *(Receive responses)*

When Jesus was a very small child, His family had just that experience.

- One night an angel spoke to Joseph, Jesus' father, in a dream and said to him;
- *"Get up; take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."* (Matthew 2:13)
- Joseph got up immediately and left Bethlehem, taking Jesus and Mary with him.

They travelled down to the country of Egypt, where they were refugees for a few years.

Jesus and His family would have had to rely on the kindness of strangers to help them as they got used to living in Egypt, a foreign country,

- where the food would have been different;
- where the language and customs would have been different;
- where they would have to find work and make new friends and rely on Father God to provide for all of their needs.

Many people today are having to leave their countries too because it is too dangerous for them to live there.

- Some of these people will have to leave their homes suddenly, like Jesus and His family did.
- Some of them will be coming to our country; arriving at your school, college, place of work and neighbourhood.

How do you think that you can show kindness to them? *(Receive responses)*

- Remember that when you show kindness to somebody in need, you are actually showing kindness to Jesus, because not does He love them, but He also knows what it is like to be a refugee in a foreign land.