

Chapter 4 “I Call You Friends”

I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. *John 15:15*

To the Parents:

In chapter 4, your child learned the following:

- Jesus called and continues to call ordinary people to be his friends and to carry out his mission.
- Jesus chose the Twelve to help him spread the Good News and carry out his mission.
- The Church is apostolic.
- Jesus asks his friends to love one another.

The friends of Jesus were drawn to him primarily because they saw in him a person who cared more about the welfare of others than about his own well-being. But being called a friend of Jesus carries with it the challenge to respond as Jesus did to the needs of others. Jesus was friend to all: the poor, the outcast, the marginalized, and the oppressed. Those who follow Jesus agree to be friends to whomever they encounter, difficult as this might be at times.

The word “disciple” is defined as one who follows and learns. The disciples of Jesus were his closest friends. They literally followed him across the land as he went about healing, teaching, and preaching God’s reign of justice and peace. They learned from him, and then proclaimed his message after he was gone. Disciples today do the same. As friends who care for one another with special devotion, disciples of Jesus today continue to live out his message of love.

With Your Child:

1. Read the story of how Matthew, a tax collector, was called to follow Jesus (*Matthew 9:9*) and talk about why Jesus welcomed Matthew as a disciple.
2. Make a list of people who are marginalized or less fortunate, and then think of ways of being a friend to them.
3. Say a prayer of thanksgiving and hope for today’s disciples of Jesus, who spread Jesus’ message of love.
4. Together read about Saint Aelred of Reivaulx on the Review and Explore page.