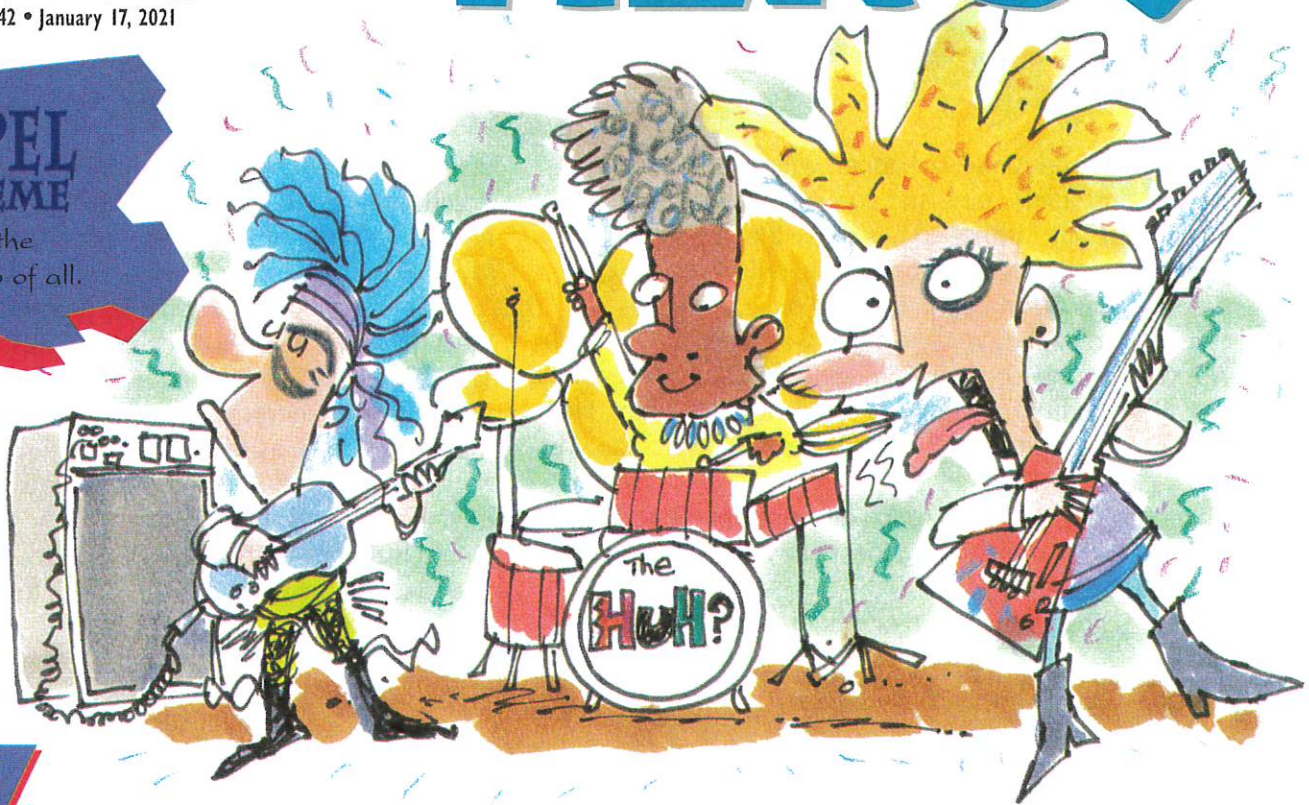




Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)  
John 1:35-42 • January 17, 2021

# WHO IS YOUR HERO?

**G**OSPEL  
THEME  
Jesus is the  
greatest hero of all.



**W**henever a popular rock group hits town, people go a bit wild. They pay outrageous ticket prices to go hear them, and then make so much noise of their own that they drown out the music. They pay outlandish souvenir prices to buy T-shirts with the group's name and picture on them, even though they know the first time the shirt hits the washer it will either shrink up or stretch out. And after the group leaves town, some folks try to imitate them by wearing the same garb, dying their hair, tattooing their bodies, piercing their noses, and so forth.

Picture this. Strobe lights furiously wind their way around the concert hall. The group explodes onto the stage. The lead singer is dressed in sequins and feathers. His hair is spiked, and dyed purple. On his face is painted a grotesque

death mask.

As the music blares, the lights suddenly all focus on a huge banner. It is a representation of the devil. The whole audience stands up and cheers. They start jostling each other, trying to get closer to the stage. Mini-fights break out. Police are called in, and some folks are led away to waiting patrol cars. A few of those in the crowd get hurt, and are shoved into ambulances. Everybody leaves angry.

During the next few days, many of those who were at the concert talk about how great it was: the music was cool, the lights were awesome, the costumes were hip. It seems these folks have chosen a hero — and they will do 'most anything to be like him. Some even hit the road and follow along behind. Wonder where it will lead them?

# FOLLOW THE LEADER



These things — and worse — happen when hero worship is misplaced. False idols come and go — movie stars, rock groups, professional athletes. They make the news and obscene amounts of money. Scores of people try to imitate them; sometimes the imitation is ridiculous, sometimes it's dangerous. And all they *really* wanted was a hero.

Are you looking for a hero? Imagine this. You see Jesus walking along in front of you. You decide to follow him. He stops to wait for you to catch up and asks you, "What do you want?"

It's a good question. What *do* you want from Jesus? What *do* you want from your heroes? How will you answer him? Can *he* be your hero?

In today's gospel story, two of John the Baptist's disciples

discover their real hero. The disciples were with John in the desert. Jesus came by and the Baptizer told them, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" The disciples immediately ran to follow Jesus.

They didn't want to copy his hairstyle. They didn't want the name of his tailor so they could dress exactly like him. They didn't want to form a fan club and sit in the audience watching him perform. They didn't want to tear off pieces of his cloak to keep as souvenirs.

They followed him and they learned from him and they imitated his ways. In the end, they, and others like them, would lead tens-of-thousands to follow the way of Jesus. Will *you* follow him? Will *you* lead others to him?

## SHARING the GOOD NEWS Activity for Class or Family

Answer these questions in writing:

1. Name a modern hero, someone you admire.
2. What do you admire about your hero?

3. How do you show your admiration?
4. Do you want to be exactly like your hero? a little like your hero? not like your hero at all?
5. Will it change your life if you follow and imitate your hero? in what way?

Now turn your paper over and answer these questions on the other side:

6. Write down the name Jesus.
7. What do you admire about Jesus?
8. How do you show your admiration for Jesus?

9. Do you want to be exactly like Jesus? a little like Jesus? not like Jesus at all?
10. Will it change your life if you follow and imitate him? in what way?

When all the questions have been answered, discuss your answers together. Talk about the dangers of misplaced hero worship. See if you can find Scripture passages that tell of the rewards of following Jesus.

