

A NOTE TO PARENTS

In Epiphany season, we traditionally hear the stories of Jesus's calling of his disciples. This year is no different. The familiar story of the calling of James and John by the Sea of Galilee will be our Gospel next week; this week we have the oddly detailed account, from John, of Jesus, Philip, and Nathanael under the fig tree: "Nathanael! Guess what! I've found the *Messiah!*" "You *what?*" "I've found the Messiah! He asked me to follow him!" "You're kidding! Who is he?" "Jesus—you know, the rabbi, from Nazareth ..." "Nazareth????!! Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" "Come on! I'll show you!" As the two of them appear, Jesus says with a twinkle in his eye, "Now there's a good son of Israel!" and Nathanael is utterly smitten: "How do you know me?" "Why," says Jesus, "I saw you under the fig tree, of course!" This is too much for Nathanael: "Rabbi, you are the Son of God, the King of Israel ..." "You think I'm the Messiah, because I saw you under a tree?!! Let me tell you, this is only the beginning ..."

Philip is there because Jesus called him and he dropped everything and came. But Nathanael—however loyal and tender he may have immediately become—Nathanael is there, at first, not because of Jesus but because of Philip. Nathanael is invited to this particular party because his friend Philip went looking for him and thought to include him. Philip's call then becomes Jesus' call, and Nathanael is undone; but the call began with Philip.

Jesus calls all of us—but there are few of us whom he calls without the work of a human intermediary. Like Nathanael, we have come to Jesus because somebody cared enough to say to us, "Guess what I've found!" ... "Come and see!"—and when we did, we found Jesus waiting for us as if it had been his idea all along.

Ask your children to consider how they have learned about Jesus. Who has been the "Philip" for them? Share your own story with your child: who was "Philip" for you? How did you respond? There may have been many Philips in your life. Have you ever been Philip for anyone else? Try inviting a friend to church next week!

© 1988 by Gretchen Wolff Pritchard. All rights reserved.

THE SUNDAY PAPER, 19 Colony Road, New Haven, CT 06511, USA

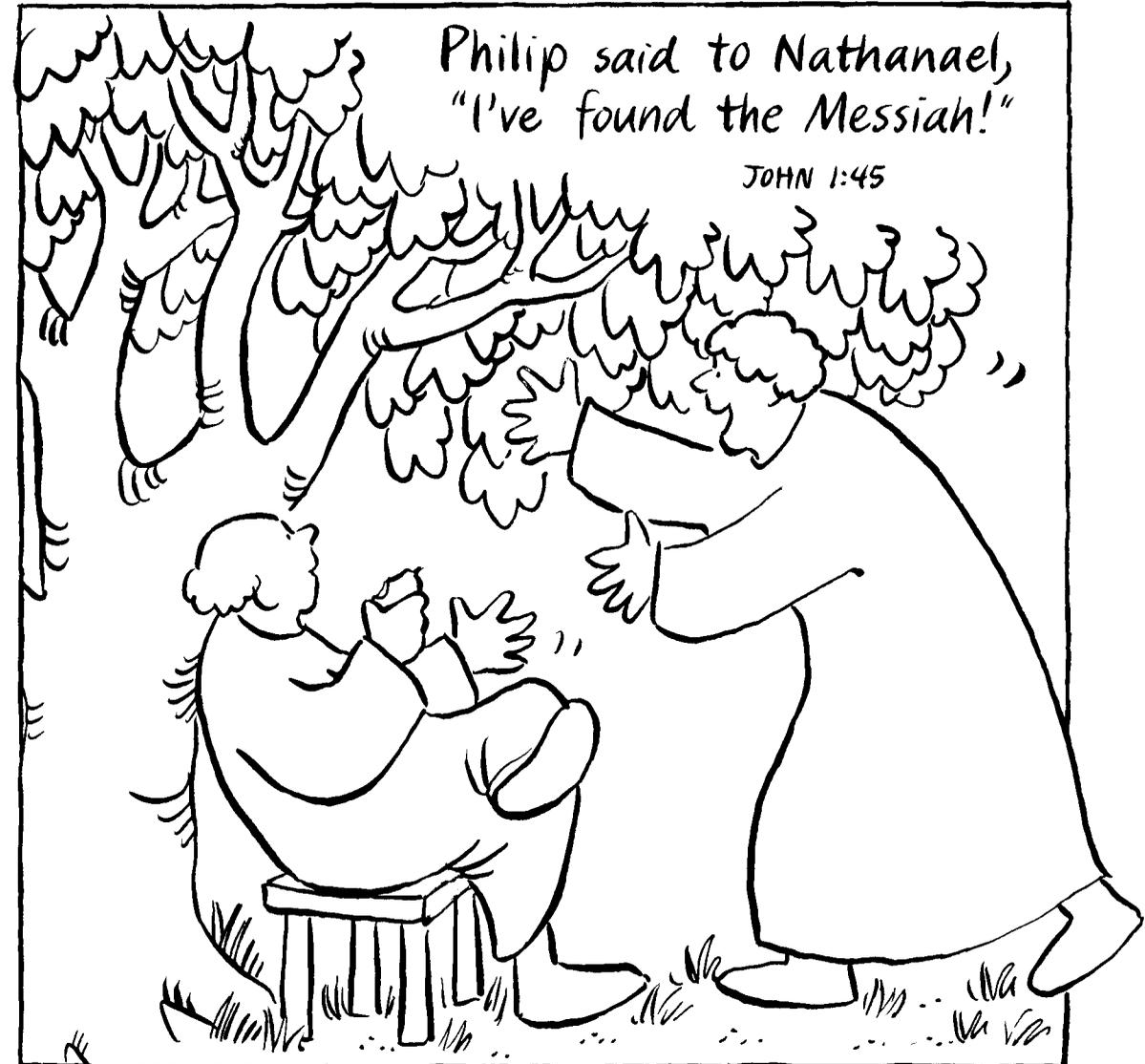
203 - 624-2520 • www.the-sunday-paper.com



THE SUNDAY PAPER

JUNIOR

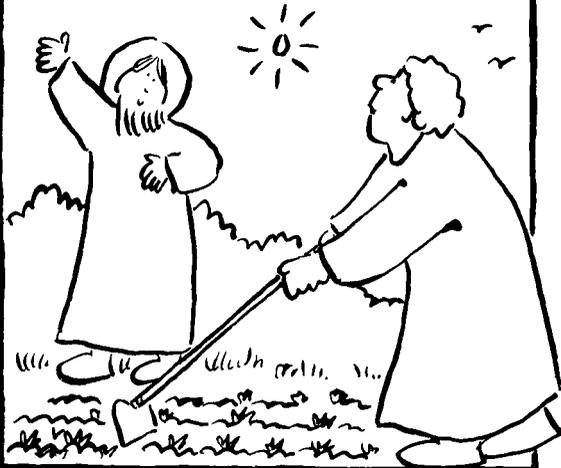
Year B
2nd SUNDAY
after
EPIPHANY



After Jesus was baptized, he set out to do God's work.



He needed helpers, so he asked a man named Philip to come with him.



Philip went and told his friend Nathanael, 'I've found the Messiah!'

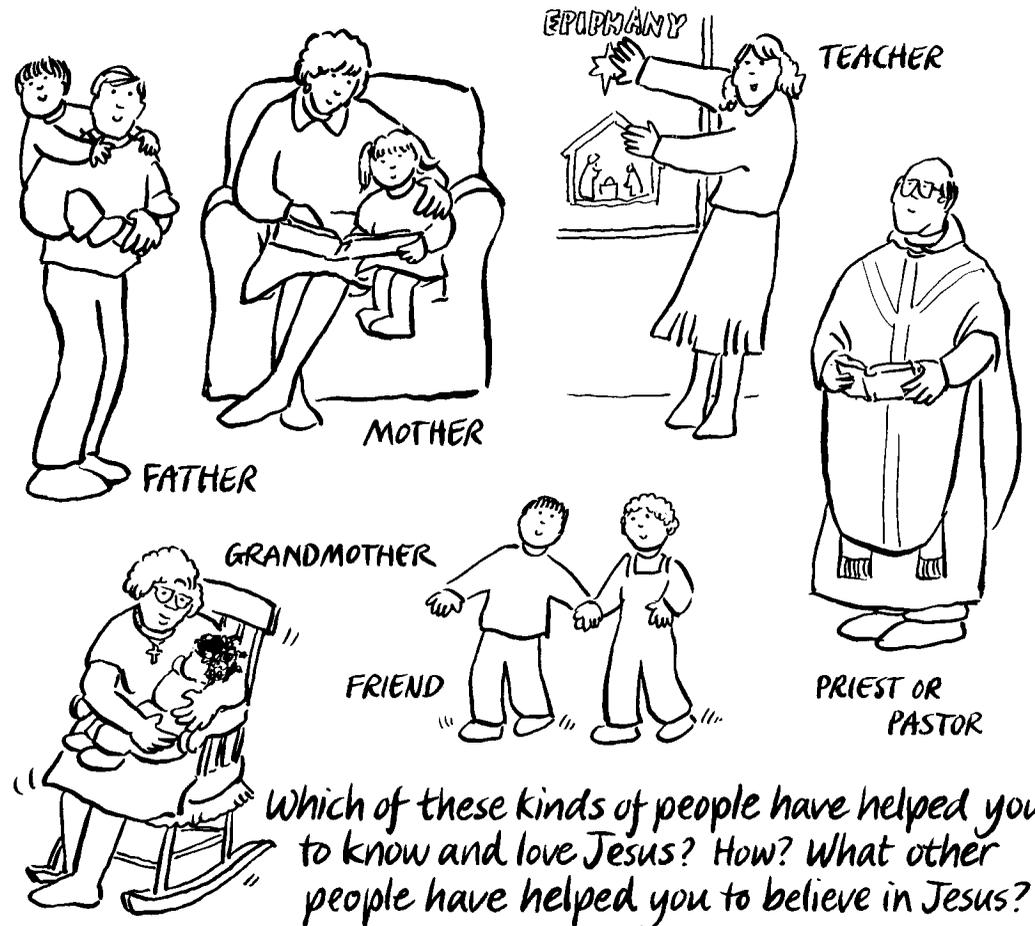


Nathanael decided to go with Jesus too. He said, 'You are the Messiah!'



Philip came with Jesus because Jesus called to him. But Nathanael came because Philip told him about Jesus.

We learn about Jesus from other people. People wrote the stories of Jesus in the Bible. And people today help us to believe in Jesus and love him.



Which of these kinds of people have helped you to know and love Jesus? How? What other people have helped you to believe in Jesus?