



INTERNATIONAL WITNESS SUNDAY

Children's Story

Written by Jeanette Hanson, director of International Witness (*Please adapt as needed.*)

I have a few things to show you today:

I have my cat's blanket, my great-nephew's stuffy, a fresh chocolate chip cookie and a pot of chicken noodle soup.

All these things have one thing in common: they all smell like something that makes me happy. When I smell my cat's blanket I remember how it feels to pet him and hear him purr. (My cat doesn't stink, by the way, he smells lovely.)

My great-nephew's stuffy smells a little like him. He is a very cute baby who loves to chew on everything. I love the way he smells when I hold him.

The smell of this cookie reminds me of my kitchen when my girls were little and we would bake cookies together. Then, we would sit down with milk and cookies and have a tea party.

And this pot of chicken noodle soup smells just like my grandma's kitchen. I can never get my soup quite like my Grandma's, but when it is close, the smell helps me to remember her.

Smells are very important. Some smells remind us of times and people that we love.

Today I'm asking a strange question – Does your mission smell like Jesus? "Mission" means the purpose of what you do, how do you act and what your church does in

your community and in the world. When people see you, do they think – "oh, that reminds me of Jesus!"?

In Luke 4:16-21, Jesus tells us what God wanted him to do, what his mission was. He says:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,"

Those are the things that remind people of Jesus, but also of God.

Mennonite Church Canada—our nationwide community of faith—also has a description of our vision or mission in the world. I have it here on the screen/poster. Let's read it together:

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and,
By the power of the Holy Spirit to grow
As communities of grace, joy and peace
So that God's healing and hope
Flow through us to the world.

There are a lot of words in that so let's focus on the first line: "God calls us to be followers of Jesus." When you follow someone, you begin to do what they do. You begin to look like them, maybe you even begin to smell like them. How can you start to follow Jesus? What will you do to answer God's call? You can draw and write your answers on this page and send them to me. I'd love to hear how you are beginning to smell like Jesus!