



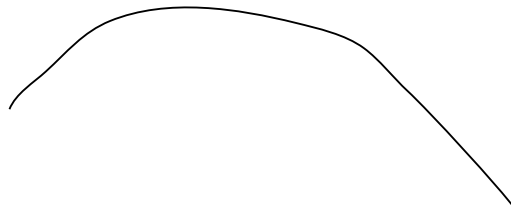
A “Fishy” Story

After Jesus died, his followers worked very hard. They wanted everyone to know about Jesus! They traveled to many countries. People wanted to hear about Jesus. After a while, many people believed!

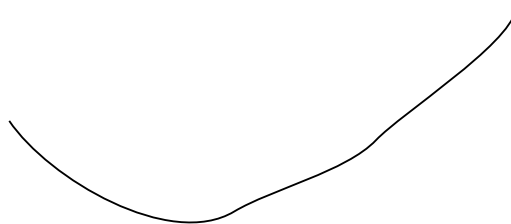
But, some people did not like Jesus’ followers. The rulers wanted people to follow their gods. But, the Christians knew there was only one God! The Christians would not give in!

So, the rulers became angry. They began to hurt the Christians. Some people were even killed! The Christians needed to be very careful! They still wanted to worship God. They came up with a plan.

Jesus’ followers met many people. But, they did not know if the other person was a Christian. They did not know if it was safe to talk about God. So, if they met someone new, the Christian would draw the top of a fish in the dirt like this:

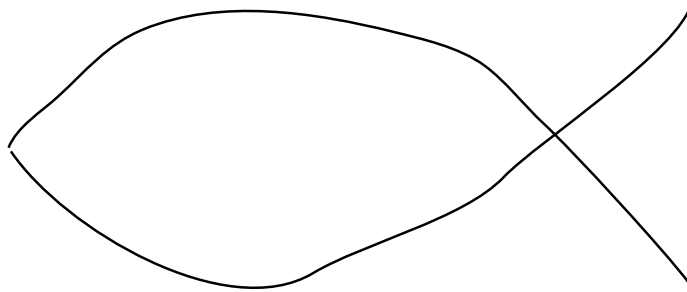


If the other person was a Christian, they knew the secret. They would draw the bottom half of a fish. It would look like this:





Then, they knew it was safe to talk. A fish would be formed like this:



People who were not Christians did not know the secret. They did not know how to finish the drawing. They did not know what it was for. Then, the Christian would not talk about Jesus. This way, fewer Christians got hurt.

At the time, many of Jesus' followers spoke Greek. In Greek, the word for fish is **ΙΧΘΥΣ**. (In English, we write it "ichthus." It sounds like ick-thus.) Christians used it as a word for Jesus. Each letter stood for a different word. It meant: Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.

Today, we can tell many people about Jesus. Can you think of another symbol for Jesus? Try to make one with your friends. You can draw one side. Your friends can draw the other side. Be creative!

We are very lucky. We can tell people how good Jesus is to us. The early Christians could not always do that. We can celebrate Mass in church. The early Christians would be killed if they did! Today, you can thank God for blessing you with freedom!