

Twenty-seventh Sunday of the Year

The Children's friend

INTRODUCTION

Jesus loved to spend time with children, enjoying their laughter, talking to them, and listening to what they had to say. They have always been just as important to him as grown-ups.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and say:

May Christ's love fill our lives with light and chase any darkness away!

SORRY

Help the children to spend some time reflecting on the events of the past week. Have they always been thoughtful and kind? Have they remembered to treat each person as though they were Jesus himself? After a few quiet moments, sing Sorry Song 4 together.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

(All) Alleluia, alleluia.

(Reader) Help us to listen to your word, Lord, and put your love into action in our lives.

(All) Alleluia.

GOSPEL (cf Mark 10:13-16)

People would often bring children to Jesus to be blessed by him. One day, the disciples sent the children away to let Jesus get some rest. But seeing this, Jesus scolded his disciples and said, 'Let them come to me, and do not stand in their way. Anyone wishing to enter the kingdom of God, must first become like one of these little children.' Then taking them in his arms, he blessed each one of them.

DISCUSSION

Why did the disciples want to send the children away? – Jesus had been preaching to the crowds all day, and his disciples knew that he was feeling tired. When they saw the group of children coming, and heard their excited chatter and laughter, they wanted them to go away and let Jesus have some peace and quiet.

What did Jesus do? – He scolded the disciples for trying to send the children away. Jesus wanted to spend time with them talking and listening to

what they had to say. The children were just as important to him as grown-ups!

Have you ever found that sometimes grown-ups are too busy or tired to listen to you, and you just seem to be getting in their way?

At such times it can be very difficult to get their attention, and make them *really* listen to what you have to say.

Was Jesus ever too busy or tired to listen to children? – Even though Jesus felt tired, he *did* not send the children away and he was always ready to listen to them.

Why did Jesus say that grown-ups need to become more like children to enter the kingdom of God? – Children love Jesus and trust in his goodness. They listen to his message and are ready to try to live as he taught them. They know Jesus as a special friend who is never too busy to listen to them. Grown-ups should remember to love and to listen to Jesus like children do. If they do this, their lives will be pleasing to God, and they will share eternal life with him in the kingdom of Heaven.

ACTIVITY

Photocopy and cut out the figure of Jesus. Stick this in the middle of a large sheet of paper. Ask each child to draw a picture of themselves with their name, and help them to cut these out. Let each child stick their picture around the central figure of Jesus, and add the caption: 'Let the children come to me.'

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, friend of little children,
you are always ready to listen
to what we have to say,
and to take care of us
in the grown-up world.
As we become adults,
help the special trust and friendship
we shared with you as little children
grow within us,
and draw us ever closer to you.