

Twenty-ninth Sunday of the Year

A place in Heaven

INTRODUCTION

James and John went to Jesus to ask an important favour. They wanted Jesus to promise them a special place beside him in the kingdom of Heaven. Listen carefully to today's Gospel to hear whether or not Jesus granted their wish.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light the candles we listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah. (*cf Isaiah 9:2-3, 6-7.*)

The world was full of darkness and shadows, but now it is filled with light so everyone can see. God sent his only Son, Jesus, to fill our world with peace and love.

SORRY

Listen to this reading (*cf Psalm 16:11*):

Lord you will show me the path that leads to everlasting life, and as you walk beside me on my journey, I will be filled with the happiness that lasts forever.

We turn to God and ask:

Heavenly Father,

guide me along your path

and never let me lose my way.

If I ever wander from your love,

because of what I say or do,

forgive me please,

and lead me back to you.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 4:
Praise the Lord.

GOSPEL (*cf Mark 10:35-45*)

The two disciples, James and John, came to Jesus and asked him, 'Master, can we sit on either side of your throne in the kingdom of Heaven?' Jesus answered, 'Only my heavenly Father can decide this.' When the other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were angry and began to argue with them. Jesus said to them, 'You must not quarrel with each other about which of you is the greatest! I have come as a servant and not as a king! Whoever thinks of others before themselves will be rewarded for their goodness, and they will have a place with me in the kingdom of Heaven.'

DISCUSSION

Why were the disciples angry with James and John? – James and John wanted Jesus to promise them a special place in heaven with him. The disciples argued about which one of them was the greatest, and deserved to have the best place.

What did Jesus remind them of? – (*See 25th Sunday of Year B.*) – That it is God the Father who will decide who deserves a place in Heaven. He will measure our 'greatness' by our goodness and willingness to think of others before ourselves. Jesus did not come as a king, but to serve all of mankind. He put our needs first, and died on the cross to save us from sin.

Can you think of anyone who puts the needs of others before their own?

(Encourage the children to make their own suggestions, for example their parents, their teachers, doctors and nurses etc.)

Has anyone ever heard of Mother Teresa?

What can you tell us about her?

Mother Teresa is a nun who truly puts the words of Jesus into action. Like him, she has made herself a servant of the people, and puts the needs of the poor and dying people in India first. She does all of this out of love for Jesus, and she expects no thanks or reward. Her goodness will make her truly great in the sight of God.

How should we live if we want to share a place in heaven with Jesus? – If we remember the words of Jesus: 'Whatever you do to others, you do to me', then we should always remember to treat other people with love and kindness, and to think of them before ourselves. By being unselfish and generous with our love, we will be assured of a place with Jesus in Heaven.

ACTIVITY

Photocopy the picture of God sitting on his heavenly throne, with a crowd of people in the foreground. Explain that only God will decide who shall be welcomed into his heavenly Kingdom.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus teach us
to be loving and caring,
and to think of other people
before thinking of ourselves.