

Fourth Sunday of the Year

God's Good News

INTRODUCTION

Jesus returned to Nazareth where he had lived as a child and learned the skills of a carpenter. While he was there, he went to the Temple and began to read from the Scriptures.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and sing the Candle Song together.

SORRY

Ask the children to close their eyes and listen carefully to the words of this reading (*cf St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:23-32*):

Make a fresh start and change your heart. Tell the truth, and do not let anger spoil your friendship with others and with God. Speak only words of kindness, and act with love and goodness towards each other. Above all, be ready to forgive others as God forgives you.

In a few moments of silence, let each of us talk to God in our hearts, and ask for his forgiveness and help to make a fresh start.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia,
Jesus is the light of the world who has come to bring the Good News to all people.
Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL (*cf Luke 4:20-30*)

Jesus began to read the words of the prophet Isaiah to the people in the Temple. 'The spirit of God is with me and he has sent me to bring the Good News to the poor. I have come to bring freedom and to show people a new way.'

After Jesus had finished reading from the scriptures he looked up at the crowd who were listening and said, 'Everything you have heard is coming true today, for I have been sent to bring the Good News to the world.'

The crowd grew angry when they heard this and said, 'Surely this is the son of Joseph the carpenter. He has no right to say such things!' Then they dragged him out of the Temple and away from the town, but Jesus slipped away before they could do him any harm.

DISCUSSION

What did Jesus say to the people after he had finished reading from the scriptures? – Jesus told the crowd that the words of the prophet Isaiah were coming true that very day. God's spirit was with him and he had come to share the message of God's love and mercy with all people.

Why did the crowd become angry? – Jesus was well known to many people in the crowd that day, because Nazareth was his home town where he had grown up. They all knew him as Mary and Joseph's son, an ordinary carpenter. They became angry when they heard him announce that he was the special one that the prophet Isaiah had foretold would come. They did not believe that there was anything special about this man.

What did they do to Jesus? – They dragged him from the Temple and hustled him out of town.

How do you think Jesus felt? – Jesus knew that his own villagers and neighbours would find it hard to accept him as anything other than an ordinary carpenter. He probably felt sad and disappointed that they were not willing to listen and believe in his message.

Had Jesus been sent to bring the Good News to the Jewish people alone? – Jesus brought the message of God's love to be shared with all people, whatever their race or colour might be. God knows and loves each one of us, and we are all of equal importance to him. Jesus was always ready to welcome and love everyone, and we must be ready to do the same.

ACTIVITY

Photocopy the illustration to be coloured and pinned onto a display board.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, open our ears to hear the Good News of God's love for each one of us.
Increase our faith and love for you,
we ask this through Christ our Lord.