

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year A
21 May 2017
John 14:15-21

Catechist Background

At the beginning of John's gospel, two disciples ask Jesus, 'Where are you staying?' to which he replies, 'Come, and you will see.' In today's passage, shortly before his arrest, Jesus gives the answer: he lives in God the Father and in his followers.

Today's gospel follows on chronologically from last week's, and further develops what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Last week focused on knowing God, and this week Jesus talks about loving God.

The Greek word that is translated into English as 'Advocate' (or 'Paraclete') is a word taken from Greek legal jargon, and is roughly equivalent to a defence lawyer. It means one who acts as a spokesman, mediator, intercessor, comforter, consoler, helper, teacher and guide.

Setting the Scene

For the activity described below, you will need hoops of the same size. Alternatively you could use cut-out circles of paper.

We Say Sorry

Leader: Lord, You bring us to your truth, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You have sent us your Spirit to guide us, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You promised never to leave us alone, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God, help us to continue to joyfully celebrate the resurrection of Jesus by the way we live and the way we treat others. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

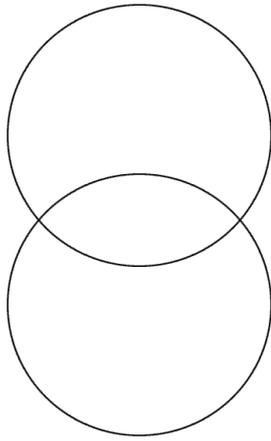
Gospel John 15:14-21

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

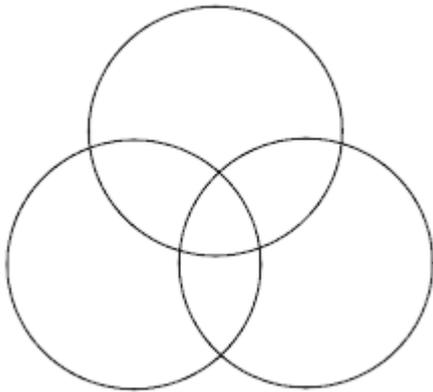
- These words of Jesus were from the night before he died. He was getting his friends prepared for a time when he wouldn't be around. How do you think Jesus' friends would have felt after he was gone?
- Who here has ever been lonely, or a bit sad, or missing someone?
- What did Jesus say that might have made them a bit more hopeful?

Response

Hold up one hoop, and say that it represents Jesus. Hold up another hoop, and say that it represents God the Father. Jesus said that he is in his Father. Put the second hoop over the first hoop so that they overlap.



Jesus also said that he would send an Advocate, the Holy Spirit to be with us. Hold up another hoop to represent the Holy Spirit in us. Jesus is in us Jesus is in the Father; loving Jesus is loving God the Father. Put the third hoop down so it overlaps the first two.



Ideally, the hoops should overlap more than they do in the above pictures. (This author was unable to find a better illustration at present.) If the hoops are large enough and space allows, let each child stand in turn in the hoop that represents the Holy Spirit, reminding them that they always have a helper with them. Tell the children that in two weeks, we will be hearing more about the Holy Spirit.

We Believe

Relating to the creed what you have shared with the children, ask this series of questions and invite the children to reply, 'I do, Alleluia, Alleluia!'

- Do you believe in God the Father and creator of all?
- Do you believe in Jesus the Son who lives even though he was crucified and died?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Helper sent to us as Jesus promised?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'We know Jesus lives in us in our love for others, and so we pray...'

Leader: We pray for the Church around the world, especially in places where it is dangerous or illegal to follow Jesus. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that everyone in the whole world will come to know that God loves them. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for people who don't have a safe place to live. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for anyone we know who is missing someone they love, that they may remember that you are always with them. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us to show your loving compassion to those we meet through the help of your Holy Spirit. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

