

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C
3 March, 2019
Luke 6:39-45

Catechist Background

The gospel for today as given in the Children's Lectionary is somewhat shorter than that which will be heard in the main body of the church. It uses just the last section, verses 43-45 and this is what we'll focus on here. It is the last section of Luke's Sermon on the Plain. The short parable at the beginning uses the image of the fruit tree, that only the good tree bears good fruit. In the same way our actions reveal our inner selves, the source of all our words and actions is rooted in our hearts. The good fruit is the mark of a good disciple.

It would be helpful to point out to the children that Lent begins this week. Lent is a special time to help us get ready for Easter. We are especially encouraged in Lent to get rid of some of the things in our lives that keep us from remembering that God loves us, and for some people that means stopping eating chocolates or puddings. We should also try and do more of the things that bring us closer to God, and some people will make extra time to pray or make a big effort to be forgiving, or to not argue with their parents. Through this gospel we might encourage the children to think of what they might do to grow closer to God, to grow as a disciple, this Lent.

Setting the Scene

Remind the children that last Sunday we heard Jesus talk about how we should love each other, and he challenged us to care about each other as God cares about us. Today Jesus asks us to look at our own lives and to think about what is in our hearts.

We Say Sorry

Leader: You call us to follow you, Lord have mercy

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You call us to trust in you, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You open your arms to all of us, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

Father, help us today to listen and to grow to be more like Jesus, your Son.
Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- Talk about the way Jesus uses unexpected images to teach us and how we often learn about ourselves from those images
- Ask the children what they have heard about fruit and how it grows.
- Is Jesus correct?
- What do they think makes a good tree? (strong, healthy, well watered and fed, lots of sunshine)

- Just like only good trees bear good fruit and like figs or apples or pears etc only grow on the right trees, so good actions only come from people who are good in their hearts. If a good tree is strong, healthy, well-watered and fed, our good hearts are made strong and healthy by trying to live as Jesus asks us to.

Response

The fruit tree is a symbol of our hearts and the fruit that grows on it is our good thoughts and actions.

Using a picture of a tree bearing fruit – or pictures of a collection of varied fruits (see sample below that could be enlarged), ask the children to think of good actions and behaviours that should be in our hearts.

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit might help here. (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Galations 5:22-23)

How might we grow and bear good fruit during Lent as we try to grow closer to God and be more like Jesus wants us to be.

Give each of the children a picture of the tree, or fruits, to take home to keep throughout Lent. They could write or colour a fruit each time they do good actions during Lent. Perhaps they could bring back the sheets at the end of Lent to be displayed.

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.'

- Do you believe in God, the Father, who made the universe?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God, who shows us how to love?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who is with us on our journey?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'We know that God gives us all we need to help us to bear good fruit, and so we pray...'

Leader: We pray for all of us in your Church, that we may always care for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that God's family may grow and bear fruit, touching all people everywhere in the world. We especially pray for people living in places where there is lots of fighting. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for all the people of our parish. May we all reach out to each other as brothers and sisters. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We take a moment to remember anyone we know who is especially in need of our prayers today. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us always to have goodness in our hearts so that our actions are good and kind. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.



