

Children's liturgy for Fifth Sunday of Lent (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: purple or rose

Song suggestions: Make me a channel of your peace (898, Laudate)

Welcome: When people have done something wrong to us we often feel angry and want them to be punished, don't we? But in today's gospel Jesus teaches us that this isn't always the right way. After all, we're not perfect are we?

Opening prayer: God of mercy, we ask you to help us to do what is right. Help us to see that we all get things wrong sometimes and to say sorry when we do. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm: Psalm 125 r 3

Gospel acclamation: *everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. For Lent we use an acclamation that doesn't use the word 'Alleluia'. We suggest 'Change your lives and believe in him' by Christopher Walker (OCP Publications).*

Gospel: John 8:1-11

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from that reading?

The scribes and Pharisees bring a woman to Jesus who has done something wrong. The law says that she should be punished, but the Pharisees ask Jesus what he would do. What does Jesus say?

Jesus says that the person who has done nothing wrong themselves, should be the person who throws the first stone at the woman.

Why do you think Jesus says this? What happens next?

Slowly, all the scribes and Pharisees leave, until just the woman and Jesus are left. What does Jesus say to the woman?

Jesus says that he will not punish her either, but that she should go away and try to do the right thing from now on. How do you think the woman felt when she heard this? Is it easy to change?

We have all done things wrong. Can you think of a time when you did something wrong? Don't say it out loud, but keep it in your heads. How did it feel when you knew you had done something wrong? What happened next? Did you get told off? How did it feel when you had said sorry, and been forgiven? Will you try not to do whatever it was again?

Jesus knows that none of us are perfect. He forgives us for the things that we have done and no matter what he always loves us. But he also asks us to change, to try our hardest not to do the wrong thing again.

Jesus asks us not to judge people who have done something wrong, because we all do wrong things sometimes. Instead we should try to forgive them, as God forgives us. But we

should also try to help them see that they need to change, so that they no longer do what is wrong.

In Bangladesh Rabiul's mum, Mahinur, works hard to earn money and to try to get enough food for the family to eat. But her neighbours aren't always very nice, because Rabiul and his dad are disabled.

Recently Mahinur was left out when her neighbours had a party. Everyone made food to share, but she wasn't invited. How do you think Mahinur felt about this?

We all have times when we are treated unfairly and it hurts. We also all have times when we are not quite as nice to others as we should be.

Let us try to forgive those who treat us unfairly and to follow Jesus' example of love for all people. But let's also try to make a change – to do what is right, and to help others to feel God's love in the way that we treat them.

Intercessions *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

Let us offer our prayers to God, who loves us.

We pray for all the leaders in the world: that God may inspire them to treat all people with love, respect and fairness so that everyone has an equal chance in life. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that she may follow Jesus' example and show understanding and forgiveness to all people. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may always try our best to do what is right, so that the world becomes a fairer place for all to live. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of love, you forgive us when we go wrong, and encourage us to try again to be better. Guide us to do what is right and to make this world a fairer place for all who live in it. Amen.

You may wish to say slowly together the Our Father, pausing over the phrase: forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration of two children not sharing. On the other half of the page ask them to draw what the children in the picture should have done instead. Or what should happen next.

Ask the children to tell their grown-ups all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to try throughout the week to make a change, do what is right and forgive others. Ask them to do all that they can to stand up against unfairness and to try to make the world a fairer place for everyone.

For more activities and resources for children this Lent visit cafod.org.uk/primary

For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

CAFOD is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of Caritas International. Charity no 1160384 and a company limited by guarantee no 09387398