

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Most Holy Trinity, Year C
16 June, 2019
John 16:12-15

Catechist Background

Great saints throughout the ages have struggled to understand the precise relationship of the Trinity. It is a mystery, not in the sense of being a case to be solved or something spooky to us, but something beyond our human comprehension. The word 'Trinity' does not appear in the Scriptures, but is a concept that we can see throughout the Old and New Testaments—for instance, at the end of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus instructs his apostles to baptise 'in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.' It is one of the things that Jesus may have been talking about in today's gospel that we have been led to understand by the Spirit of Truth.

Setting the Scene

Although the usual colour for Ordinary Time is green, today's important feast means that the liturgical colour is white.

Remind the children of what last week's feast was (Pentecost), and the importance of the Holy Spirit. Explain that this week is also a very special feast, and ask if anyone knows what the word 'Trinity' means—and whether they can explain what they think it means. Depending on the age of the children in your group, it may be useful to talk about some of the terms that are used when trying to talk about the Trinity—like 'three Persons in one God' or even 'Father,' 'Son,' and 'Holy Spirit.'

We Say Sorry

Leader: You care for us like a loving Father, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You save us from our sins, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You inspire us to follow you, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God our Father, you sent your Son to bring us truth and your Spirit to make us holy. Help us to worship you, one God in three Persons by living out our love for you.

Gospel Intro

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: John 16:12-15

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- Ask the children to do some very peculiar maths. What normally happens when we add 1+1+1? Normally we get 3. But when we talk about God, we talk about God The Father (1), God The Son (1), and God The Holy Spirit (1), which still equals One God, and no 'person' is no more important than the other!

- Some people have found it helpful to talk about knowing God in three ways (but remembering that there is only one God):
 - God who is in charge of us. Who do we know who, like God, loves us but is in charge of us? Answers might include parents, teachers, childminders, grandparents. We might sometimes be able to feel God's love from those who look after us.
 - God who is next to us. Who do we know who, like God, loves us and is our equal? Answers might include friends, brothers and sisters, cousins, neighbours. We might sometimes be able to feel God's love from those who are on the same footing as us.
 - God who is inside of us. We might be able to feel God's love from inside our own hearts and minds, helping us to be courageous or understanding or loving or anything that was brought up at Pentecost last week.
- Linking today with last week's feast of Pentecost, remind the children that the Holy Spirit helps us to understand what Jesus tells us—about the love of God the Father.

Response

Arrange the children in groups of three. One child in each group will take the role of Jesus, one of the Holy Spirit; the third child will play themselves. The leader will take the role of God the Father, and will go around to each 'Jesus' to tell them a word like 'love' or 'friendship' or 'kindness.' 'Jesus' will tell the 'Holy Spirit' who will tell the third child. Get the children to swap roles until everyone has played all three parts. Ensure people speak clearly, or the activity will disintegrate into Chinese Whispers! The point of the activity is not to make the words confused.

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 that God, the Father is Almighty Lord?
- Do you believe that God the Son, Jesus, is Almighty Lord?
- Do you believe that God the Holy Spirit is Almighty Lord?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'We know that the Father and the Son have sent the Holy Spirit to help us, and so we pray...'

Leader: We pray for all of the people who are leaders in the Church in the world, that they may help all people in the world to give glory to God. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for world leaders, that they may help us to live lives that are holy. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for people in the world who have not heard of the love that God has for them. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for all people in this parish community, that we may be full of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, we know you are within us, with us, and watching over us. Please hear all of our prayers, and help us to keep our eyes open to see your love within us, around us, and above us. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

