

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Seventh Sunday of Easter, Year B
21 May 2023
John 17:1-11

Catechist Background

The Feast of the Ascension will have been celebrated last Thursday. This means that our children may have celebrated the feast of the Ascension on Thursday at school or in the parish. (we cannot assume that all have done so).

Thus, we hear this gospel in the light of the Ascension, when Jesus gave to his disciples their mission to, 'Go out into the whole world, proclaim the good news to all of creation.'

This week's gospel continues the Last Supper discourse of the last two Sundays. Jesus prays to the Father expressing his concern for his disciples, once they are without him. He prays for 'the men you took from the world to give to me', praying essentially that they would continue his work, all that he has taught them.

Setting the Scene

Remind the children of the Jesus' Ascension into heaven, emphasising that he is no longer with the disciples physically. Today we are going to hear of Jesus care and concern, his prayer for them.

If possible email the families with cut-out paper doll shapes. Templates can be found on Google images or elsewhere. They will need three or four shapes – or shapes that come in strips. If this is not possible the leader will need to ask the children to draw the outline shape of a child (and maybe add more shapes later)

We Say Sorry

Leader: Lord Jesus, you lead us to the Father, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You teach us the truth, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: you fill us with joy, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God, help us to show your love to the world by our unity. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation To highlight the significance of the Easter season, you may choose to sing 'Alleluia' after the completion of the gospel reading as well as at the beginning.

Gospel: John 15:9-17

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

In our gospel we hear Jesus praying to his Father. Remind the children that he is praying before his death, he is praying at the Last Supper. In his prayer he talks about how he has taught the disciples, and how he will leave them in the world.

- What are some of the things that you know Jesus taught them?
- What do you think will be important for them if they are to proclaim the Good News as he asked them?
 - *To be true to God*

- *To be united*
- *To share his joy*
- *To be holy*
- *To be faithful to God*

Explore with the children what each of these things might mean. You might then focus particularly on being united, for next week we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, when, first of all the disciples are united in their fear and then in their experience of the coming of the Holy Spirit and the mission that they will carry out together.

What do we gain from being united with one another – and with God?

Consider words such as teamwork, courage, strength, confidence, friendship, love. You might use the group of children gathered around you as a model of unity, and their families at Mass in the church as a bigger model – gathering together in faithfulness to God.

Response

To illustrate our unity ask the children to write their name or draw their face on one doll shape. Then to write the name, or draw the face of one or two of their friends or family. If not already in strips, ask them to get their parents' help to staple or sellotape the dolls together. Ask them to add more children during the week as a sign of our unity.

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 and creator of Love?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, God the Son, who teaches us the truth?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, urging us to show Love and friendship to each other in our world today?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'We know that God hears all our prayers, and so we pray...'

Leader: We pray for all Christians that they may work to be united in love for each other. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for leaders of countries, that they may work together for peace in the world. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for people who suffer in any way, particularly from COVID 19, that they may know the care of others. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for our friends, that they may know that we love them and that they may know that God loves them. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us to show our care for each other just as you care for us. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

