

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
29 October 2023
Matthew 22:34-40

Catechist Background

Jesus is still speaking in the Temple precinct, this time with the Pharisees. It was not uncommon practice in Jesus' day to invite debate about which commandment of the 613 laws of the Torah was the most important. Keeping all 613 laws perfectly was an exacting task, and if laws appeared to conflict in a particular situation, it was important to know which was the more important law to uphold. Jesus is the first person recorded to have linked these two laws from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (Love of God) and Leviticus 19:18 (Love of Neighbour).

Setting the Scene

For the activities below you will need a large photograph of a loved one - the bigger the better and some mirrors!

Remind the children of the theme of last week's gospel, that we must 'give to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God what is God's' - us! This week we will be looking at the connection between God and people even more.

We Say Sorry

Leader: You have created us in your image, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You are present in the people around us, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You remain within us even when we cannot see you, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

Lord God, strengthen us in faith, hope, and love so we can serve you in every moment of our lives. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Matthew 22:34-40

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- What are the commandments that Jesus said were the most important? Does that sound like one commandment or two?
- Hold up a photograph of a loved one. If I was going to show this person I loved them, would I rip up their photograph? Stamp on it? Spray paint and mud all over it? Throw it in a cage at the zoo?
- We don't have photographs of God, but WE are made to be God's images. How, then, should we treat each other? How should we treat ourselves?

Response

Ask the children to look at themselves (using the mirrors) and at the people around them. They are 'God's reflection' and so are the other people they can see. As the mirrors are moved around the room, invite them to think about one way in the next week that they are going to try extra hard to be loving to God by being loving to another person.

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, who has created all of us to reflect God's image to the world?
- Do you believe in Jesus, who came to show us how to be like God?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us live out God's love today?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'Jesus told us to love others as we love ourselves, and so we also now pray...'

Leader: We pray for all people who believe in God, that we can see God in each person we meet. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for people all over the world, that we may see that we are all neighbours and live in peace. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for anybody who lives in an unsafe place without caring people to look after them. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for anyone in our parish community who is feeling like they are not a very good image of God. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us to show we love you by showing our love for others. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

