

Liturgy of the Word with Children
2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
14 January, 2024
John 1:35-42

Catechist Background

This early portion of John's Gospel follows a pattern he repeats several times over the course of the chapter. A follower of Jesus uses a special title of his, 'Lamb of God' and 'Messiah' this week, and thereby enthusiastically leads a new person to Jesus, who recognises the new disciple. This is in contrast to the other Gospels, where conversion appears to be more of a struggle over time. John probably wrote in this fashion for stylistic reasons, to impress upon us early on the important Christological truths that will be further elucidated throughout his Gospel.

The words translated as 'live' (alternatively translated 'stay' or 'abide') and 'see' hold symbolic significance for John. He uses them in a semi-technical sense throughout his writing. They not only describe physical acts of where one sleeps or what one visualises, but more importantly they describe what happens between believers and Jesus in an intimate relationship of faith.

"Cephas" is the Aramaic word for 'rock' (Aramaic was the language spoken by the Jews, whereas Hebrew was their written language). "Peter" is the Greek word for 'rock', and the Jews of that time would have known and used Greek when speaking to non-Jews. Jesus and his disciples probably spoke to each other in Aramaic but the New Testament texts were written in Greek and therefore their writers would have translated what was said in Aramaic into written Greek.

Setting the Scene

For the activity below you will need pictures of various situations. These could be photographs, drawings, posters, or pictures displayed on a computer or any other means.

We Say Sorry

Leader: You are our Teacher, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You are our Messiah, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You call us to you every day, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God our Father, show us how to live in peace with others in our world. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: John 1:35-42

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

Prior to asking the following questions, it may help the children to keep the story straight if the Gospel is briefly enacted by some of the children; give volunteers the parts of John

the Baptist (reminding them, if necessary, what we know of him from elsewhere in the Gospels), the two disciples (Andrew and another), and Jesus and Peter

- Two very important questions were asked in this Gospel reading. What did Jesus ask Andrew and the other disciple? If Jesus asked you what you wanted, what would you say?
- What did the two disciples ask Jesus in return? What did Jesus tell them?
- When he first met the disciples, Jesus probably would have been staying and living in a normal home. Where does Jesus live now? (Try to encourage the children to see that not only has Jesus ascended to heaven, but also lives on in love through us, his followers.)
- Jesus challenged the first disciples to 'come and see' where he lived. What might that mean for us? How can we 'see' where Jesus is in the people around us?

Response

Hold up photographs, pictures or posters you have prepared. Challenge the children to see where Jesus is in the situation. For instance, if it is a picture of a birthday party, Jesus might be seen to be present in the joyful celebration. If it is of a natural disaster, Jesus might be seen to be present in the people helping each other out. Continue with as wide of a variety of types of situations as possible.

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 loves us and sent us his Son to live with us?
- Do you believe in his Son, Jesus who invites us to 'come and see'?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who helps us to recognise God in our lives?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'You invite us to see the needs around us and so we bring them to you in prayer...'

Leader: We pray for the Pope, that he may be a true successor to Peter by following in Jesus' love. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that all people will come to know Jesus as the Lamb of God and the Messiah, the Saviour of the world. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for people in the world who do not have a safe place to stay. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for our families, that they may be happy and joyful at all times. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us to see you around us in our lives, and to serve you through our loving kindness toward other people. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

