

Liturgy of the Word with Children
3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
21 January 2024
Mark 1:14-20

Catechist Background

This week we hear Mark's version of how Jesus' acquired his first followers, which differs in some respects from the account we heard from John last week.

The words of Jesus in the first part of today's Gospel reading, 'The Kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent and believe the Good News,' is a summary of all of Jesus' teaching in the Gospel.

'The Sea' in the scriptures represents a place of danger, even though it was very familiar to the disciples who sailed and fished it daily. As such, the negative ideas we may have today with 'nets,' likening them to snares or methods to entrap others, don't fit the context. Fishing for people means to catch them for Jesus, to save them. In that way, 'fishers of men' were not trapping men, but freeing them to be followers of Jesus.

Setting the Scene

For the activity described below, you will need a net for the children to 'go fishing' with. (Garden centres might be a good source for this). You will also need pre-prepared paper fish (the internet might provide this) with a simple challenge that the children can try to do in the following week, such as, 'I will clear away someone else's dishes,' 'I will share my toys,' 'I will help someone who is feeling sad.'

We Say Sorry

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You are present among us in each other, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You are the giver of all good gifts, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God, your love is bigger than anything we can imagine. Help us to follow your Son, Jesus, by bringing peace to others. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- Has anyone here ever been fishing before? Did you use a fishing rod or a net?
- Do you think Andrew and Peter and James and John had met Jesus before? What do you think they were expecting to happen as they followed Jesus?
- How do you think we can 'fish' for other people and bring them to a better understanding of God's love, as Jesus asks us to do?

Response

Give each child the opportunity to 'go fishing' with the net you have prepared, and allow them to catch a fish. This may be especially fun if the net has a handle long enough for them to put it over a barrier (such as a table with a sheet over it) so they cannot see another person putting a 'fish' into the net. Read out the challenge on the back so all can hear it. Encourage the child to take the instruction on the back as a challenge to try and do at least once this week. By our kindnesses to others, we may bring them to a greater understanding of warmth of God's love. Once all the children have caught a fish, invite them to stand up with their fish held high and proclaim together, 'I will follow Jesus!'

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 made the world and all the treasures it contains?
- Do you believe in Jesus, God the Son, who invites us to follow him with our lives?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who helps us bring others to Jesus' love?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'We follow you in our actions and in our hearts and so we now pray...'

Leader: We pray for all God's children, that we may each show God's love to others to the best of our ability. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for those who provide food for our world: fish, dairy products, meat, fruit, vegetables, grain. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for anyone who feels lonely or left out of things. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for those in our parish who are unwell. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us to spread your love to others through our actions. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

