

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
23 June 2024
Mark 4:35-41

Catechist Background

Today's Gospel comes at the end of a day's teaching to the people. Jesus had taught the crowds in parables and then explained the parables to the disciples. He then took the disciples away from the crowds into the boat on the Sea of Galilee. The disciples are frightened by the sudden storm and wake Jesus from his peaceful sleep. Notice the contrast between their terror and Jesus' peace. Their words are somewhat reproachful, questioning his care for them. What did they expect him to do, one might ask. Today's Gospel shows Jesus' power over nature, another example from Mark of Jesus' divine authority. Clearly, from their reaction at the end of the passage, the disciples are unsure of Jesus' identity, despite their expectations of him. What they see is a human being who acts with the power of God (as shown throughout Mark's Gospel). Jesus then questions their faith in him: 'How is it that you have no faith?' Did they not trust that all would be well because he was there?

What is important here is that we are able to look beyond the miracles to the deeper reality of the person of Jesus. This Gospel calls upon us to reflect on our own lives, to be able to bring our struggles to God in prayer and to trust in God's response

We Say Sorry

Leader: You speak to us your saving Word, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: you lead us into truth, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You open our ears and our hearts, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

Loving God, help us to do what is right by following Jesus and knowing you love us.
Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Mark 4:35-41

Before reading the Gospel, have ready some toy blocks, enough to build a tower. Ask the children to name things that might cause them to worry or to be afraid. As each worry is mentioned begin building a tower of blocks, adding a new block as each worry is named. Tell them that if we let worries build up in us without sharing them, it can begin to feel as if everything is too much, and then at some point it will all crash down around us. (At this point, knock over the blocks.) Ask the children who can they talk to when they have worries. How do these people help them? Tell them that in today's Gospel we will hear about a time when the disciples were worried and frightened. Then read the Gospel passage to them.

Reflecting on the readings with the children:

Help the children to recall the story by asking them:

- Where did today's Gospel story take place?
- What were the disciples worried about?

- Was Jesus worried? How do you know?
- What did the disciples do?
- What do you think they expected Jesus to do?
- What did Jesus do?

Jesus did a really amazing thing that none of the disciples would have expected. He calmed the storm after the disciples came to him with their fears. The disciples were amazed and as a result they were unsure who he really was. Help the children to understand that Jesus, through his actions, was helping his friends to understand that, through him, God is present in the world.

Response:

Like the disciples we can share our worries with Jesus. Jesus will help us if we bring him our worries in prayer. The way Jesus helps will not always be what we have expected, but it will be a way which makes us feel better and able to deal with our problems. Lead the children in a quiet time in which they can talk to Jesus about one thing they are worried or concerned about.

After an appropriate time pray together, *'Jesus, when we are afraid, help us to remember to place our faith in you.'*

We believe:

Relating the Creed to what you have shared with the children, ask this series of questions and invite the children to reply, "I do", e.g.

- Do you believe in God who always loves and cares for us?
- Do you believe we can always turn to Jesus to calm our fears?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who brings us peace?
- Do you believe in the Catholic Church where we come together as a family and that, one day we will share everlasting life with God in heaven?

We pray:

Relate the bidding prayers to today's Gospel by starting them saying "Jesus said he is with us always as we pray, and so we pray:"

Leader: That all people will let Jesus touch their lives with his Good News,
Lord, in your mercy

Response Hear our prayer.

Leader: That we will learn about Jesus from his actions and his words,
Lord, in your mercy.

Response: Hear our prayer.

Leader: That we will follow the example of Jesus in showing care for all who suffer or are lonely, Lord, in your mercy.

Response: Hear our prayer.

Leader: That the people we know who are suffering from illness, may be helped by listening also to the Good News, Lord, in your mercy.

Response: Hear our prayer.

