

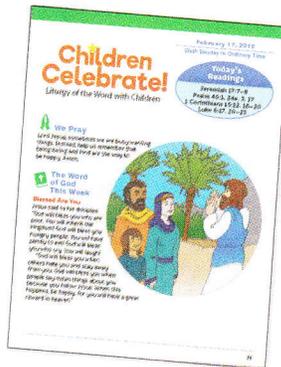
Children Celebrate!

Liturgy of the Word with Children

Preparation

Children's Leaflet

Have on hand copies of the Children's Leaflet for this Sunday. Distribute copies either at the start of the session or before the children return to the assembly.



Prepare with Prayer

Surely, I wait for the LORD; who bends down to me and hears my cry, Draws me up from the pit of destruction, out of the muddy clay, Sets my feet upon rock, steadies my steps, And puts a new song in my mouth, a hymn to our God. ...

When I sing of your righteousness in a great assembly, I do not restrain my lips. (Psalm 40:1-4, 10)

Scripture Background

The symbol of the tree figures prominently in today's First Reading. Artists and poets say that a tree is an especially apt symbol for a human being because it belongs both to the earth and the sky.

Jeremiah speaks in particular of trees that grow near streams in arid climates; yet they can endure long dry spells. So it is for human beings. In order to endure life's trials, we must stay near to God.

Today's passage from 1 Corinthians is part of a larger argument that Paul is constructing against those who believe only in the immortality of the soul, not of the body also. He says that the proof of bodily immortality can be found in the Resurrection of Christ, and if people don't believe in that, then their faith in Christ is utterly pointless.

"This, too, shall pass." This is what some people tell themselves to get through difficult times, and in today's Gospel Jesus is saying it, too, to all those who feel in this world the sting

February 17, 2019

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's Readings

Jeremiah 17:7-8
Psalm 40:1, 2de, 3, 17
1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20
Luke 6:17, 20-23

Blessed Are You

Prepare the Meeting Space

In the worship area, on a table draped with a green cloth, place:

- ▶ a Lectionary
- ▶ a battery-operated candle
- ▶ a music player
- ▶ recording of instrumental music or the suggested gathering songs

Suggested Music

See page 62 for more information.

Gathering: "God Loves Me" (Seeds CD-2, Track #15) or "The Beatitudes" (Promise & Good News CD-2, Track #17)

Gospel Acclamation: "Gospel Acclamation; Alleluia" (Promise & Good News CD-2, Track #24)

of poverty, hunger, desolation, and persecution. Jesus reminds them that their condition is not permanent, that God will have the final say in their lives—and that God’s ways are not humanity’s ways. In God’s Kingdom, the world as everyone knows it will be turned upside-down. Present conditions will be reversed, and those who suffer now, for Christ’s sake, will rejoice in unending glory.

Children’s Connections

Today’s gathering activity gets the children involved in imaginative movement. An explosion of new research is showing that children nowadays, more than ever, need to get up and get moving, in part because of the increasingly sedentary nature of their playtime. It has been demonstrated that kindergartners whose daily routines include dance, exercise, and other kinds of physical activity improve in their general cognitive abilities, including memory and concentration.

Today’s Liturgy of the Word develops the theme of trust in God. It may seem like pie-in-the-sky advice to encourage children to keep trusting in God no matter what happens to them, but the readings for the day assure us that nothing could be truer and surer than divine blessing on those who put their faith in God.

In the early 1990s, an American interviewing a survivor of Stalin’s gulag remarked that the old woman’s life as a slave laborer must have been horrible beyond compare. “No!” Grandmother Merz responded quickly and firmly. “Where God is, nothing is heavy. What did I go through? I had my daily bread. Yes, the work was hard, but where God is, nothing is really too hard.”

All her life, Grandmother Merz had maintained a deep, childlike trust in God, although her parish church had been closed and her Catholic religion outlawed all before she turned the age of eight. Grandmother Merz’s enduring faith dramatically underscores how deep and abiding a person’s early religious training can be. (For the complete story of Grandmother Merz, go to <http://www.feefhs.org/lfs/cwe/cs-con8.htm>.)

More About ...

The Catechism on Trust in God

- “God, ‘HE WHO IS,’ revealed himself to Israel as the one ‘abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.’ These two terms express summarily the riches of the divine name. In all his works God displays, not only his kindness, goodness, grace and steadfast love, but also his trustworthiness, constancy, faithfulness and truth. ... ‘God is love,’ as the apostle John teaches.” (214)
- “God is Truth itself, whose words cannot deceive. This is why one can abandon oneself in full trust to the truth and faithfulness of his word in all things. The beginning of sin and of man’s fall was due to a lie of the tempter who induced doubt of God’s word, kindness and faithfulness.” (215)
- “Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ’s promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit.” (1817)

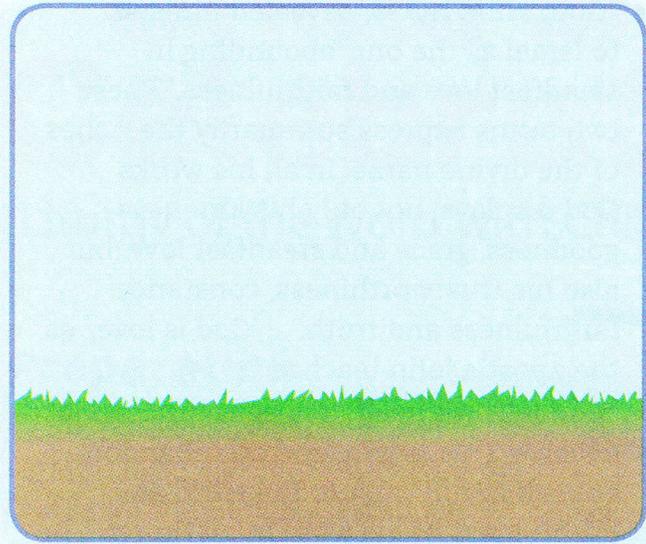
The Children’s Leaflet

The leaflet for this week helps children learn about God’s care for those who suffer, through a summary of the Gospel, prayer, and a creative activity.

You may distribute the leaflet now, for use during the session, or before the children return to the assembly. If you distribute the leaflet now and time permits, you may wish to read with the children the summary of the Gospel in “The Word of God This Week” after you have read the Gospel. Point out the artwork and ask the children what is happening in the picture.

Leaflet Activity

Values and traditions create strong family and provide the topic of this week's leaflet.



The Liturgy of the Word

Gathering

Ask the children to stand in rows, at arm's length from all other persons beside them and in front of them. Then ask them to raise their arms and pretend they are trees, rooted to the spot. While music is played, they will dance like trees. They may move any part of their bodies except their feet. Stand in front of the group and demonstrate. Then start the music and at various intervals call out new instructions: Dance like a tree in spring with the wind blowing hard, like a tree in summer with gentle breezes, like a tree in fall beginning to feel cold, like a tree in winter starting to freeze.

When the music stops, ask the children: When is it easiest to be a tree? Hardest? Then invite them to raise their arms to God, like trees lifting their branches, for the opening prayer.

Collect

Leader: For our Opening Prayer today, each time you hear the words, "We pray," please respond, "Rooted in God, reaching for Heaven." Come, Holy Spirit, and make us like trees, we pray.

Children: Rooted in God, reaching for Heaven.

Leader: Like trees growing beside a stream, we pray.

Children: Rooted in God, reaching for Heaven.

Leader: Like trees with leaves always green, we pray.

Children: Rooted in God, reaching for Heaven.

Invite the children to be seated. Light the candle and begin the First Reading.

First Reading

Leader: In today's First Reading, our loving Father tells us what will happen to us if we always stay close to him and never lose our faith in him.

Read Jeremiah 17:7–8. Then say, "The word of the Lord."

Children: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

The psalm may be either sung or spoken. Before beginning, sing or announce the response.

Leader: Happy are they who hope in the Lord.

Children: Happy are they who hope in the Lord.

Leader: *Read Psalm 40:1, 2de, 3, 17.*

Second Reading

Leader: We learned in the first reading that if we stay close to God, we will be like trees that grow near water—always green, always alive. In today's Second Reading, Saint Paul talks to some people who do not believe that God has given them the gift of everlasting life. Paul tells them how wrong they are.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16–20. Then say, "The word of the Lord."

Children: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Invite the children to stand. Sing the suggested Acclamation or another familiar one. If you choose not to sing the Gospel Acclamation, proceed to the proclamation of the Gospel.

Proclaim the Gospel

Leader: In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us that even if sometimes we are poor, hungry, and sad, everything in our lives will turn out okay if we keep our faith in God.

The Lord be with you.

Children: And with your Spirit.

Leader: A reading from the Gospel of Luke.

Children: † Glory to you, O Lord.

Leader: Read Luke 6:17, 20–23. Then say, “The Gospel of the Lord.”

Children: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

Ask the children about times when they have felt hungry or sad. Tell about a time when you felt hungry or sad.

Explain that having problems is just a part of life, even for the animals and the trees. As human beings, however, we have something that animals and trees don’t have. We have the power of faith. If we keep our faith in God even when times get hard, they will not seem so very hard.

Tell the children about Grandmother Merz or about some other saintly person whose faith has been strong since childhood.

Profession of Faith

Leader: Please stand now for our profession of faith. Our response today is, “I do believe.”

Leader: Do you believe in God the Father, who blesses the poor?

Children: I do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in God the Son, who feeds the hungry?

Children: I do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit, who comforts the sorrowing?

Children: I do believe.

Prayer of the Faithful

Leader: As God’s chosen ones who know that our God is a God of love, let us pray for the needs of people everywhere. The response to each petition will be, “We place our trust in you, O God.”

That the Holy Father and all leaders of the Church will stay strong in God’s love, let us pray to the Lord.

Children: We place our trust in you, O God.

Leader: That people living in war-torn countries will stay strong in God’s love, let us pray to the Lord.

Children: We place our trust in you, O God.

Leader: That families in our parish who struggle with poverty will stay strong in God’s love, let us pray to the Lord.



Children: We place our trust in you, O God.

Leader: Invite the children to pray their own petitions. Then pray:

Let us pray. Lord God, help us always to have faith in you and to rely on your goodness. When we are struggling, remind us of your everlasting protection and love for us. We ask you this through Christ our Lord.

Children: Amen.

Return to Assembly

The Liturgy of the Word ends with the Prayer of the Faithful. Prepare the children to return to the assembly in a respectful manner. If you haven’t already done so, distribute the leaflets. Remind the children to take the leaflets home and share them with their families. Encourage them to complete the Family Corner activities as a family.