

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Trinity Sunday, Year B
26 May 2024
Matthew 28:16-20

Catechist Background

The Sunday after Pentecost is a celebration of the mystery of the Trinity. 'Mystery' in this sense is not a tricky problem to be solved. It is the concept of something so incomprehensible to humans that we will never quite get it, but we can grow in our understanding. 'Trinity' is a word that does not appear anywhere in the Bible, and yet it is a very important concept to Christians. Some splinter groups from Christianity such as Jehovah's Witnesses are quick to point out that Jesus himself never claimed to be God. He did not need to. First-century society and family relationships were organised differently to our own. Boys would learn and take up the profession their fathers had; if your father was a Temple priest, you were a Temple priest; if your father was a carpenter, you were a carpenter; if your Father was God, you were...God. And yet Christians (like Jews) believe there is only one God, even though Christians also say that there are three persons in that one God.

Early Christians also struggled with the relationships between the Persons in the Trinity, and the fruits of their struggles are seen in the creeds such as the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed, among others. Different images have been used throughout the ages to explain the Trinity, but children often struggle less with the concept than adults do. We all need different aspects of God to come to the fore at different times in our lives - sometimes even at different times of the same day! Sometimes knowing God's intimate yet powerful creativity will be most important; sometimes we need to feel God's redeeming love for us; other times we need to sense God's inspiring movement.

Setting the Scene

For the activity below, you will need a clover (or shamrock) leaf [or a picture of one], a bowl of water and a branch for sprinkling.

We Say Sorry

Leader: You care for us like a loving Father, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You save us from our sins, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God, help us to share in your love, coming to know you as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- Show them the leaf (or picture of) and ask them: How many leaves are here? Is there one leaf or three?
- How many true gods are there? There is one, and yet we talk about God in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That is some funny maths!
- Can you think of any prayers or songs or stories that talk about God as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- Why do you think we understand God in these three ways?

Response

Show the children the bowl of water. Remind the children that we make the Sign of the Cross when we enter the church by dipping our fingers into the Holy Water in the font. Tell them that when we do this, we are reminding ourselves of our baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity. Tell them that today we will be sprinkled with the water as they may have experienced in the church on Easter Sunday.

With the branch sprinkle the children with the water, asking them to say together, 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.' [Be prepared for lots of giggles. Sprinkling with water often brings out joy, even among serious people.]

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 created the wonderful world?
- Do you believe in God the Son, Jesus, who saves the world through his life, death and resurrection?
- Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit, who helps us live God's love in our lives?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the Prayers of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying, 'We believe that God is with us always and so we also now pray...'

Leader: We pray for the Church, that we may grow in understanding of God's love.
Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for world leaders. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For ourselves that we may try to help people to know about God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the people that we know, that we may grow in knowledge that Jesus is with us always. We especially pray for anyone who is feeling lonely. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us to trust in your love, to learn by your example, and to follow your commands. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

