

**Liturgy of the Word with Children**  
**Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year C**  
**18 May 2025**  
**John 13:31-35**

### **Catechist Background**

Today's Gospel reading comes from John's Gospel (even though most of the Gospel readings this year (Year C) come from Luke's Gospel. Chronologically, this passage comes from the last night Jesus was with his disciples before he was crucified. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John's Gospel does not contain a narrative of the last meal Jesus shared with his friends. Instead we hear how Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, telling them to do the same to others. This is a message of 'how to serve others', not of being served by them. It is in direct contrast to the culture of the day, where usually it was the lowliest servant who carried out unpleasant tasks like washing the dust and the dirt from the feet of the inhabitants in a house and their guests. It would have been far more "normal" for a servant or disciple to have washed Jesus' feet, not the other way around.

John's Gospel is divided into the 'Book of Signs,' and the 'Book of Glory;' this passage comes near the beginning of the 'Book of Glory', and glory and love are major themes in it. It prompts us therefore to think 'what does love entail' and 'how is glory related to love like this?'

### **Setting the Scene**

For the activity below, you will need a paper foot shape for each child, and drawing materials, and a Cross (ideally one on a stand) or a statue of Jesus.

### **We Say Sorry**

*Leader:* You call us to follow your ways, Lord have mercy.

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You call us to serve one another, Christ have mercy.

*All:* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You call us to be your disciples, Lord have mercy.

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

### **Gloria**

### **We Pray (1)**

God, our Father, we know we are your children and that you love us always. Help us to enjoy the happiness that your love gives us. Amen.

### **Gospel Intro**

Tell the children this Gospel reading comes from Jesus' last night with his friends. He told them many things to help them after he was gone, because he knew his time on earth was nearly up.

### **Gospel Acclamation**

**Gospel** John 13:31-35

### **Reflecting on the Reading with Children**

- Jesus asked his friends (including us) to love one another.
- What did he mean by this?
- How do we show that we love each other today?
- Encourage them to think about real caring words and actions, not just romance between people. *[It's Easter, not Valentine's Day!]*

## Response

- Give a shape of a foot to each child;
- Invite them to draw something on the foot that they can do to love other people as Jesus loves us;  
If they need ideas, ask them to think about what they could do to show Jesus' love:
  - to their parents...
  - to their siblings...
  - to children at school...;
- Encourage each child to come up in turn and put their footprint around the Cross (or statue of Jesus), so that they all make a path.
  - Point out that by doing the things they have drawn on the feet, we will be following in Jesus' footsteps.
  - Remind children that in last week's Gospel reading, we were reminded that we are sheep who should follow Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

## We Believe

Relate the Creed to what you have shared with the children by asking these questions and inviting them to reply, 'I do, Alleluia, Alleluia!' [*Explain that we say 'Alleluia' – the happiest word – because it is Easter and Jesus has come back to life.*]

- Do you believe in God the Father, who is full of Glory?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God, who was sent to love us?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who is sent to help us to love others?

## We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: 'Lord, we want to follow Jesus' example of loving others, and so we pray...'

*Leader:* We pray for priests and bishops, that they may be true examples of Christ's love. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for politicians and leaders, that they may write and follow rules and laws that make it easier for people to love each other. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for anyone who is sick, and especially those who are very ill. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for anyone we know who is feeling sad or lonely. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Lord, help us to follow your commandment to love one another as you have loved us, and to let that love show. We might even be the answer to somebody else's prayer! We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

*All:* **Amen.**