

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Third Sunday of Easter, Year C
4 May 2025
John 21:1-19

Catechist Background

It is important to remember that Peter was a fisherman before he met Jesus, as were some of the other apostles. When Peter goes fishing in today's Gospel reading, is he considering leaving behind his encounter with Jesus and returning to his old life? Perhaps for him it is a temporary diversion to allow him to sort out the tumultuous recent events. Perhaps he just needs to catch something to eat or to sell. We do not know, but he and the other fishermen were not succeeding. However, once they follow the man's instructions they make a huge catch of fish, and at that point Peter recognises the man as Jesus and in his excitement leaps into the sea, presumably to swim to Jesus on the shore.

After eating together, the conversation with Jesus over the fire is an important redemptive moment for Peter: previously (as we heard during Holy Week), Peter denied Jesus three times over a charcoal fire after his arrest; yet in today's Gospel reading, Peter affirms his love for Jesus three times, again over a charcoal fire, and Jesus responds with the commands "Feed my sheep" and then "Follow me".

Setting the Scene

For today's activity, you will need a fish shape for every child, writing/colouring materials, and a 'boat', possibly made of paper or card (this could be a large cardboard box), in which to put the fish. Alternatively, you could use a net. (There are some fish cut-outs below or you can download a copyright-free one from the internet).

We Say Sorry

Leader: You come to us when we are weak, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: You show us your love when we need it, Christ have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: You are with us everywhere we go, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God our Father, we know we will be with you forever. Help us to look forward to the future with hope and joy. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel John 21:1-19

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- Why do you think Peter went fishing?
- Do you think he was usually a good fisherman?
 - How many fish did he catch at first?
 - How many fish did he catch with Jesus' help?

- Are we sometimes like Peter (able to do things when Jesus helps us)?
 - Can you think of a time when Jesus helped you to do something?
- Jesus said something about sheep to Peter in our Gospel today – what did he say?
 - Was Jesus talking about actual real sheep?
 - What or who do you think Jesus might have meant?
 - What or who was Peter supposed to be 'catching' in the future?

Response

- Give each child a fish shape.
 - Ask them to write their names or draw a picture of themselves on the fish,
 - Allow them to put their fish in Peter's boat.
- Explain to them:
 - the boat represents the Church;
 - Peter helped to lead the Church when it began;
- the Church is bringing everyone to Jesus – including you and me.

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 made the whole world?
- Do you believe in Jesus, God the Son, who came to save the world when people messed it up?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who is active in the world still today?

We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: "God, you were able to change Peter from being afraid to being very brave in standing up for what was right, and so we pray for the things we need in our world today..."

Leader: We pray for the Pope, that like Peter, he leads Jesus' flock safely. Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for people who own big businesses, that they use their power to treat people fairly and well. Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for all people who are afraid, especially people who live in parts of the world where it is dangerous to believe in Jesus. Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for any of our friends who have been arguing recently. Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord, thank you for hearing our prayers. Like Peter, we trust in your goodness. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.
All: **Amen.**

