

**Liturgy of the Word with Children**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A**  
**18 January, 2026**  
**John 1:29-34**

### **Catechist Background**

This week's Gospel revisits John the Baptist's recognition of Jesus, but from John's Gospel. John (the Evangelist) does not recall Jesus' baptism, but retells John the Baptist's account of it afterwards. In ancient times, having someone 'witness' was like having a character reference. The more prestigious the witness, the more revered is the one being endorsed. John the Baptist not only lists himself as a witness but assures hearers that God is behind this, as 'the one' who sent him to baptise told him so.

The use of the title of the Lamb of God and the dove resting on Jesus calls to mind rites described in the Old Testament. Jesus' crucifixion at the time of the Passover identifies him as the Passover lamb. As the original Passover brought the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, so Jesus saves us from our slavery to sin. Additionally, sheep and doves were used in burnt offerings to acknowledge God's lordship, and in purification offerings to restore ritual purification to items or people which/who had been made unclean, often by blood or death. Jesus' life, death and resurrection points to these events also (i.e. the acknowledgement of God's lordship and the restoration of holiness to humanity).

### **Setting the Scene**

For the activity below you will need 'dove' shapes and colouring/decorating materials. (You may find templates on the internet which you can print and cut out, e.g. <https://freesvg.org/1537138389>)

Ask the children what they remember from last week's Gospel reading (Jesus' baptism from Matthew's Gospel), as this week continues many of the same themes.

### **We Say Sorry**

Before listening to the Scriptures which are full of God's love, let us take a moment to remember that we do not always love each other as we should.

*Leader:* You came to show us how to live in peace, Lord have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You came to call us back to God, Christ have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You are the Lamb of God, Lord have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

### **Gloria**

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

Father of heaven and earth, hear our prayers and show us the way to peace in the world. Amen.

### **Gospel Acclamation**

**Gospel:** John 1:29-34

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

- What did John the Baptist say that he saw resting on Jesus? [a dove]
- Can you think of other stories in the Bible that have doves in them? (e.g., Noah sent out a dove to see if there was dry land after the flood.)
- What sorts of things do doves make us think of? [Hopefully someone will answer 'Peace.']
- What did John the Baptist call Jesus at the end of the Gospel? Why do you think he said that?

## Response

- Give each child a shape of dove to decorate.
- As they decorate them, have an informal chat about how the Holy Spirit is with each one of us.
- Remind them that the Spirit gives us blessings, to help us treat people kindly and with love, and to help us know God better.
- When everyone is finished, hold the children's doves above their heads one at a time to remind them that the Spirit is in them too, as it was in Jesus.

## We Believe

Relating the Creed to what you have shared with the children, ask these questions and invite them to reply: 'I do.'

- Do you believe in God the Father of all humanity?
- Do you believe in God the Son, Jesus, the Chosen One of God?
- Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit, who rested on Jesus at his baptism and who rested on us when we were baptised?

## We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: 'Lord God, we know you hear us and so we now pray...'

*Leader:* We pray for all who prepare people to be baptised, that they may themselves be faithful and loving. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for people who make important decisions about businesses and companies. May they act fairly and kindly. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for people who are in danger. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for anyone we know who needs our prayers. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Lord, you gave John the Baptist the wisdom to see who Jesus truly was. Give us the wisdom to live well in our world today. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

