

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Seventh Sunday of Easter, Year A
17 May 2026
John 17:1-11a

Catechist Background

We celebrated the Feast of the Ascension on Thursday and our children may have celebrated the feast in school or in the parish (but we should not assume that all have done). So, we hear today's Gospel reading in the light of the Ascension, when Jesus gave to his disciples their mission to, 'Go out into the whole world, proclaim the good news to all of creation.'

This week's Gospel reading continues the Last Supper discourse which we have heard over the last two Sundays. Jesus prays to the Father expressing his concern for his disciples, once they are without him. He prays for 'those you have given me', praying essentially that they would continue his work, all that he has taught them.

Setting the Scene

Remind the children of the Jesus' Ascension which took place sometime after today's Gospel reading. Tell them today's Gospel reading comes from the Last Supper, when Jesus was praying for his disciples and thinking how they would cope when he was no longer with them in person.

For the activity below you will need to create some cut-out paper doll shapes. Templates can be found on Google images or elsewhere. You will need four or five shapes per child, or you could make some people chains instead (see <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Paper-People-Chain>).

We Say Sorry

Leader: Lord Jesus, you lead us to the Father, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: You teach us the truth, Christ have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: you fill us with joy, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God, help us to show your love to the world by our unity. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel John 17:1-11a

Reflecting on the Gospel Reading with Children

In our Gospel reading today we hear Jesus praying to his Father, and the prayer is quite long. In his prayer Jesus talks about how he has taught the disciples, and how he will soon leave them.

- What things did Jesus teach the disciples to do?
 - *to be faithful to God;*
 - *to look after each other and work as a team (be united);*
 - *to be joyful and share that with others;*
 - *to be holy;*
 - *to care for others;*
 - *to tell people about him (Jesus).*
- Jesus wanted the disciples to tell people about him when he had left them. Which of these things will be important for them if they are to do this?

Ask the children to give an example of how the disciples could do each of these things (e.g. keep praying, make sure they are all safe, help each other feel loved, do the right thing, be kind...)

Then focus particularly on being united, (as next week we celebrate Pentecost, when the disciples were first united in their fear and then as they received the Holy Spirit and its effect on them).

- What do we gain from being united with one another?
- What do we get from being united with God?
- In what ways are we here today a team?
- How do we look after each other? (co-operation, strength, confidence, friendship, love).

Response

To show our unity ask the children to:

- write their name or draw their face on one doll shape;
- Then write the name, or draw the face of one of their family on the next shape;
- Then write the name, or draw the face of one of their friends on a third shape;
- (If the shapes are not already in strips), stick the three doll shapes together in a line;
- Encourage them to take their line of shapes and two blank ones home, so that they can add more shapes with names of their family and friends during the week as a sign of unity.

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!'

- Do you believe in God the Father and creator of Love?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, God the Son, who teaches us the truth?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us feel connected to others around us?

We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying, 'We know that God hears all our prayers, and so we pray...'

Leader: We pray for all Christians that they may be united in love together. Lord, in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for leaders, that they may work together for peace. Lord, in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for those who are suffering, that others may care for them. Lord, in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for our friends, that they may know that God loves them and that we love them too. Lord, in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord, help us to show our care for each other just as you care for us. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.
All: **Amen.**

