

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C
13 July, 2025
Luke 10:25-37

Catechist Background

The familiarity of the story of the Good Samaritan may blind us to the fact that it would have been quite shocking to its first hearers. We cannot overestimate the importance of ritual purity to the first century Jewish community in which Jesus lived. If the priest and Levite had come into contact with a dead body or a non-Jew (and who could tell, if the beaten man was unclothed and unconscious), they would be unable to perform their duties in the Temple that were essential to the worship of God, the most important aspect of their life. In order to be able to resume their duties, they would have to undergo purification, which would be a potentially embarrassing admission of 'uncleanness.'

It is also difficult for a 21st century Westerner to understand fully the hatred between the Samaritans and Jews. Jews travelling to Jerusalem would travel great distances out of their way to avoid Samaritan areas. It is entirely possible that upon regaining health, rather than be grateful to be alive the beaten man would have been angry at the Samaritan for making him 'unclean.' He was certainly not the person who would have been expected to help!

Finally, a note about the 'lawyer' ('expert in the Torah'): as an expert, he knew the answer to the question he posed to Jesus. In fact, the Gospel reading tells us that he was testing Jesus with it. His problem was that he had too legalistic a definition of what 'loving God' and 'loving one's neighbour' is. To him, loving God meant following meticulously the rules laid out in the Torah. One of these rules described 'loving your neighbour' as looking after your kin - and Samaritans were not kin. Jesus deftly deconstructed the lawyer's suggestion that love can be measured by legal minimum standards!

We Say Sorry

Leader: Lord Jesus, you are our teacher and friend, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, you are our guide, Christ have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, you are the way the truth and the life, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God our Father, may the Light of your Love help us live our lives in the way you want us to. Amen.

Gospel Introduction

Without some explanation, the children might conclude that the two passers-by were just not kind.

- This would mean the children would miss some key details of this Gospel reading.

So, you should explain briefly to them:

- the first century characters of 'priest,' 'Levite,' 'Samaritan' and 'lawyer', and
- that Jews and Samaritans did not usually like one another or even go near each other.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Reflecting on the Gospel Reading with Children

- Why did the 'lawyer' ask Jesus what he should do to have eternal life?
- Why didn't the priest and the Levite help the injured man?
- Why is it surprising that the Samaritan helped him?
- Sometimes we can be like the priest and Levite in our lives.
 - Can you think of a time when you have been like them?
- How can we be like the Good Samaritan?

Response

Either in one group (or smaller ones if needed) we are going to re-enact today's Gospel reading;

- Begin by assign parts. Characters could include the following:
 - Jesus;
 - Man who is robbed;
 - Priest;
 - Donkey;
 - Lawyer;
 - Levite;
 - Innkeeper.
 - Onlookers;
 - Robbers;
 - Samaritan;
- NB: Ensure that the robbers do not *really* beat anyone up! A good way to prevent this is to tell the robbers that they must act out their part in S-L-O-W M-O-T-I-O-N, and that they must not at any time touch the victim.)
- Afterwards, spend some time asking the children how they felt playing their part.
 - Did it make they feel good about themselves?

We Believe

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

- Do you believe in God the Father, who made us out of love?
- Do you believe in Jesus, the Son, who came to show us how to love?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to Love others?

We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: 'We know we should look after the needs of others and so we now pray...'

Leader: We pray for priests, bishops and deacons and all those with official roles in the Church. May they always remember that loving others is as important as their other duties. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for people who have powerful jobs. May they use their power to look after those who are in need. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for people who are like the Samaritans, and are left out because of something they cannot change about themselves. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for anybody we know who is sick or hurt in any way. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord, help us to be like the Samaritan and look after those we meet. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**