

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C
27 July, 2025
Luke 11:1-13

This is the last Children's Liturgy resource until 7th September 2025.

Catechist Background

Due to their age and psychological development, many children (and adults too!) often understand God answering prayers a bit like Santa Claus. ('God, please let me win the competition,' or 'Please let me get a bike for my birthday'.) We should try to help them grow in their understanding of prayer, and to understand that it is not a magic spell but a request to God who wants what is best for us.

Today's Gospel reading can be broken down into three parts. The first part is Luke's presentation of the 'Our Father,' slightly shorter than the liturgical version we know. The second and third parts are nearly comic in their descriptions of a householder coming to the aid of a persistent neighbour, and of parents giving their children what they need.

It may be important to be aware that some children might not know or have a good relationship with their father, or may have parents who are not good at showing their love to their children. We should also remember that some children may feel that their prayers are not always answered. It may be worth acknowledging that sometimes we want things that are not really good for us, such as asking for ice cream for every meal, which it wouldn't be nutritious or filling. Other times the answer to a prayer might be dependent on something we, or someone else, has to do. If we pray, 'Please let me do well on a test,' but do not study for it, a key element is missing. Even when natural or human disasters strike, there is the opportunity for people to reach out in love to each other.

Setting the Scene

For the activity below, you will need a small object (a cross, statue of praying hands or an unlit candle) which the children can use as a prayer aid and pass around between them.

We Say Sorry

Leader: Lord Jesus you forgive us our sins, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: You came to show us the right way, Christ have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

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

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Gloria

We Pray (1)

Dear Lord, help us to see your goodness in the world and to use wisely the things you give us. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Luke 11:1-13

Reflecting on the Gospel Reading with Children

- Why was the person banging on his neighbour's door? What did he need?

- Why was his request answered in the end? (The emphasis should be on the person's persistence, not on the unwillingness of the neighbour.)
- Who here has ever been hungry and asked their parents for something to eat?
 - What did your parents give you when you asked?
 - Were any of you given a stone instead of food? Or a snake? Or a scorpion?
- Have you ever asked your parents for chocolate and they didn't give it to you?
 - Why do you think they didn't give it to you?
- What does Jesus say will be given to anybody who asks for it? Does this give us a hint about what we should be praying most for? What does the Holy Spirit help us to do?

Response

Jesus tells us that God is like a loving parent who wants to help his children grow up to be the best possible people they can be;

- This involves us responding to the Holy Spirit so that we can do what God wants us to do.
- This also involves us praying (talking and listening to God).
 - So, at the start of today's Gospel reading, Jesus teaches his friends the 'Our Father.'
 - We usually use a slightly different version.
- Go through the 'Our Father' with the children, saying one line at a time and allow the children to repeat the line after you.
- Encourage them to ask questions about certain words and phrases, for example:
 - What does "hallowed" mean? = "holy";
 - What does "trespass" mean? = to 'go where you should not go';
 - What does "indebted" mean? = to 'owe something to someone' (to be in debt to them).
- It may help to teach them some simple actions to accompany the lines.

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 the earth and hears our prayers?
- Do you believe in Jesus, God's son who came into this world and teaches us how to pray?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who God sent to us and helps us to pray?

We Pray (2)

As this week's Gospel reading is all about prayer, it is a good opportunity to allow the children to voice their own prayers, but you will need to manage this for them, so:

- ask the children to sit in a circle if possible, or a semi-circle;
- explain that you will pass around a small object and that when it is their turn to hold it, they can say a prayer out loud if they wish;
 - show them the object so that they know in advance what it is;
- then, invite them to:
 - close their eyes and be still;
 - think about a place in the world or somebody that they know who needs prayers.
- pass the object round the group, letting each child say a prayer when the object reaches them;
- once the object has come back to you, finish with a prayer such as the following.

Leader: Lord, we know you hear our prayers. Help us follow the Holy Spirit in our lives and do what we can to make the world as you want it to be. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**