

Liturgy of the Word with Children
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C
5 October, 2025
Luke 17: 5-10

Catechist Background

The Children's Lectionary gives a very shortened version of today's Gospel reading and you may want to use the full Gospel passage. Today's Gospel provides two challenging images for us to consider. First we have something (faith) the size of a tiny seed being able to uproot a tree with many roots and plant it in the unlikely location of the sea. This is not meant to be taken literally, as Jesus did not himself perform absurd miracles. It was probably meant to emphasise that the Apostles' faith, though small, would grow like a seed and be sufficient for the tasks they would need to do.

The second part of the Gospel emphasises that faith is a gift, not a right. The Apostles are rebuked for understanding their relationship with Jesus as a transaction: 'we follow you and so you owe us something.' (In today's Second reading, 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14, Paul reminds us of the concept of gifts: God gave us these things, we didn't earn them!). We should note that Jesus does not say that God is *like* the demanding master in the second story here, but rather that our attitude should be like that of the servant described. The phrase 'mere servants' is sometimes translated as 'servants who are owed nothing.' As we are human and God is God, indeed we are owed nothing. Blessings from God are not something we earn. We should not approach God with an attitude of 'What's in it for me?' but 'How can I serve you?' Also, God's servants can't quit! We will always belong to God.

Setting the scene

For the activity below, have some mustard seeds to show the children.

We Say Sorry

Leader: Lord Jesus, you bring us to your truth, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You are our guide, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Your always free us to love you, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God, forgive us when we make wrong choices and lead us in your way of peace. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Luke 17:5-10

Reflecting on the Gospel Reading with Children

- Did anyone think the stories in today's Gospel were a bit odd? What was odd about them?
- Who here has faith – I mean, who here believes in Jesus?
- Can you plant a tree in the sea? (No! Faith doesn't mean having odd, silly or useless powers)
- Do you think that Jesus *wanted* his followers to plant trees in the sea? (No)
- So what might Jesus have meant? (We need faith in order to do important, loving things);
- Have you ever asked 'Can I have a reward for just doing what I was supposed to do?'
- That's not really the point of a reward, is it?
- What is it that we are 'supposed to do' as Christians? (Love God and look after everyone).

Response

In the Gospel reading today, Jesus speaks about faith which is the size of a mustard seed.

- Show some mustard seeds to the children, so they can see how small they are.
- Explain that something this small can grow into something large (up to 2.5 metres in height!)
- In a similar way, Abraham was the father of a huge nation. Great things have small beginnings.
- We should be grateful for opportunities we have to spread God's love, not looking for a reward.

Introduce the following game: "Freeze/unfreeze"

- Everyone stands still around the room, like frozen statues.
- Only when someone shakes their hand, smiles and says 'Hello!' can they move.
- When your hand has been shaken, you may then go and greet others and shake their hand.
- Begin play by all 'freezing' except the leader, who begins shaking hands when all are ready.
- After a few moments of play, everyone will be unstuck. Ask them then to sit down and listen.
- Ask: how many people at the very beginning of the game could move? (Only one: the leader.)
- And how many could move at the end? (All!)

Ask: do things in our world seem a bit stuck?

- How many people are needed to start unsticking things? (Again, only one, or maybe all of us!);
- What does it feel like when we are 'stuck' in our lives?
- How does it feel when someone help us get unstuck?
- When you began unsticking people in the game, did you want to continue helping people?
- So it is with faith: when we live out our faith, it grows and we enjoy it.

We Believe

Relate the Creed to what you have shared with the children, by asking these questions and inviting the children to reply: 'I do'.

- Do you believe in God the Father almighty who gave us life?
- Do you believe in Jesus, who came from heaven to free us?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who helps us to live as Jesus taught us?

We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: "We know God loves us and so we now pray..."

Leader: We pray for Church leaders. May their faith help them in their role. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for leaders of this country. May they lead wisely. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for people who have jobs in which they serve others. May they feel valued for their service. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for anyone who feels stuck in their lives in any way. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us to live as you taught and spread joy to others. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

