

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C
26 January, 2025
Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21

Catechist Background

After being affirmed in his mission in the Gospel readings in the previous two Sundays by both his Father and his mother, in this Sunday's Gospel we see Jesus publicly stating his mission himself. He borrows his job description from the one originally used for Isaiah - likewise, it is our calling too. The scene is not complete here; we see the reaction of his listeners in next week's Gospel.

Setting the Scene

For the activity listed below, you will need to set up a circle of rope or masking tape on the floor as a 'prison' large enough to hold all of the children. Alternatively, arrange chairs in a loose circle with enough space between them to walk.

We Say Sorry

Leader: You show us how to live, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: You invite us to follow you, Christ have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: You give us all we need, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Gloria

We Pray (1)

Heavenly Father, we know you love us more than we can imagine. Help us to understand you more and more and to show that in our lives. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Luke 1:4, 4:14-21

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- Explain to the children that Jesus is speaking in the synagogue at the start of his public ministry, and that he is reading out loud a section from the Jewish Bible.
- In that section the Prophet Isaiah says how he has been sent by God to do certain things:
 - What has Isaiah been sent to do?
(bring good news to the poor, proclaim freedom to captives and new sight to the blind, to set the downtrodden free and to proclaim the Lord's year of blessings);
 - Can you think of times when Jesus did any of these things?
- As followers of Jesus, we should try to do the type of things that he did.
- Even if we don't know anybody who is blind or in prison, we should still look out for people who are in need and try to help them.

Response

- Suggest to the children that even though we are not actually in prison or blind, there are things in our lives that might make us feel 'stuck.' We can feel like prisoners, or these things can keep us from 'seeing' clearly how things really are.
- Ask the children what sorts of things might make us feel like we are not free, or unable to understand things clearly (i.e. being tired, ill, shouted at, someone being unfair to us).
- Gather the children inside the circle you have prepared earlier.
- Put them in groups and give each group one of the reasons for feeling stuck i.e. "Being ill".

- Tell them that when you say that Jesus has set them free from something, the people in that group should all step out of the makeshift prison.
- Using whatever suggestions they have put forward, call out, 'Jesus has set you free from _____!' (fill in the blank with 'being tired' or 'somebody being unfair to you,' or another of their suggestions).
- Repeat until all the groups have been 'set free' and everyone is standing outside the 'prison'.

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 world and everything in it?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God, who came to set us free?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who was with Jesus in Nazareth and is with us now?

We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying, 'We trust that Jesus is still looking after those in need and so we pray...'

Leader: We pray for people whose jobs are about telling people about God's love. Help them to remember how important that is. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for people who make laws. Help them to make laws that will help people feel free and happy. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for all people who are in prison, and people who are poor. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for ourselves, that we are able to help other people feel free and happy. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord, we know you care for everyone in the world, especially those who need the most support. Help us remember that you are with us when we are in need. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

