

**Liturgy of the Word with Children**  
**Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**  
**2 March, 2025**  
**Luke 6:39-45**

### **Catechist Background**

Today's Gospel reading as given in the Children's Lectionary is shorter than that which will be heard in the main body of the church. It uses just the last section, verses 43-45 and this is what we'll focus on here. It is the last section of Luke's *Sermon on the Plain*. The short parable at the beginning uses the image of the fruit tree, that only the good tree bears good fruit. In the same way our actions reveal our inner selves, the source of all our words and actions is rooted in our hearts. The good fruit is the mark of a good disciple.

It would be helpful to point out to the children that Lent begins this week. Lent is a special time to help us get ready for Easter. We are especially encouraged in Lent to get rid of some of the things in our lives that keep us from remembering that God loves us, and for some people that means stopping eating something indulgent. However we should also try to do more of the things that bring us closer to God, and so some people will find extra time to pray or make a big effort to be forgiving, or not to argue with their family. Through this Gospel reading we might encourage the children to think of what they might do to grow closer to God, to grow as a disciple, this Lent.

### **Setting the Scene**

Remind the children that last Sunday we heard Jesus talk about how we should love each other, and he challenged us to care about each other as God cares about us. Today Jesus asks us to look at our own lives and to think about what is in our hearts.

### **We Say Sorry**

*Leader:* You call us to follow you, Lord have mercy

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You call us to trust in you, Christ have mercy.

*All:* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Leader:* You open your arms to all of us, Lord have mercy.

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

### **Gloria**

### **We Pray (1)**

Father, help us today to listen and to grow to be more like Jesus, your Son. Amen.

### **Gospel Acclamation**

**Gospel:** Luke 5:1-11

### **Reflecting on the Reading with Children**

- Talk about the way Jesus uses unexpected images to teach us and how we often learn about ourselves from those images.
- Ask the children what they have heard about fruit and how it grows.
  - Is Jesus correct?
- What do they think makes a good tree? (strong, healthy, well-watered, fed, lots of sunshine).
- Ask "Do apples grow on pear trees?" (No! Apples only grow on apple trees);
- Ask: will a tree that is not well grow lovely healthy fruit on it? (No);
- Well, just as good trees bear good fruit and apples and pears only grow on the right trees, so good actions only come from people who are good in their hearts.
- How do we keep our hearts healthy and strong? By looking after them and following Jesus;
- If we try to live as Jesus asks us to, our good hearts will be made strong and healthy.

## Response

The fruit tree is a symbol of our hearts and the fruit that grows on it is our good thoughts and actions.

- Use a picture of a tree bearing fruit (see the sample below that can be enlarged)
- Ask the children to think of good actions and behaviours that should be in our hearts.
  - The Fruits of the Holy Spirit might help here: (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23)
- Remind them that Lent starts this week, and Lent is the time when we prepare for Easter by trying to be kind and loving, and stopping doing things that we know are wrong or unkind;
- Ask: how can we grow and bear good fruit during Lent as we try to be more like Jesus?
- Give each of the children a picture of the tree, or fruits, to take home to keep during Lent.
- Invite them to draw or colour in a fruit on the tree each time they do good actions during Lent.
- Perhaps they could bring back the sheets at the end of Lent to be displayed.

## 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 universe?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God, who shows us how to love?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who is with us on our journey of life?

## We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: "We know that God gives us all we need to help us to bear good fruit, and so we pray..."

*Leader:* We pray for all of us in your Church, that we may always care for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray that God's family may grow and bear fruit, touching all people in the world. We especially pray for people living in places where there is lots of fighting. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We pray for all the people of our parish. May we all reach out to each other as brothers and sisters. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* We remember anyone we know who is especially in need of our prayers today. Lord in your mercy,

*All:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Lord, help us always to have goodness in our hearts so that our actions are good and kind. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

*All:* **Amen.**



