



Catechist Background

Today we return to Matthew's Gospel as we re-enter Ordinary Time. We are reminded how Jesus felt compassion for the people and how he had previously showed his love and care for them by healing and teaching them. In today's Gospel reading, he showed his love further by giving the disciples authority to cast out demons, heal the sick, raise the dead and teach others about the love of God, so that more could be touched by the Lord. We too today have a share in this work.

Setting the Scene

- Ask: have you noticed any changes in the church or this room since last week? *Hopefully they will notice the colour green is more prominent.*
- Explain: we are now back in Ordinary Time, and the colour for this season is green because this is when we grow, in our everyday lives.
- Explain: In the next weeks we will hear how Jesus taught and prepared the disciples for the task he was sending them out to do at that time, and later after he had gone back to heaven.

For the activity below, have a few hand-sized objects each with a smiley face on it. These could be a small ball, a keyring or a stone on which you have painted a face.

We Say Sorry

Leader: You cover us with your protection, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: You trust us to carry out your work, 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)

God, your light guides us. Help us to do what is good and stay away from what is not. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Matthew 9:36-10:8

Reflecting on the Gospel Reading with Children

In the Gospel reading today Jesus was thinking about who and what the people around him needed.

- Ask: In the reading, Jesus felt sorry for the people around him. Why?
- Ask: Have you ever seen sheep in a field? Are sheep clever animals? (No!)
- Ask: Sheep need a shepherd, but do you know what for? (protection from other animals, and guidance when they have to find and walk to areas with fresh grass);
- Ask: Would sheep survive without a shepherd? (Not for long).

In this Gospel reading, Jesus thought the people around him were like sheep without a shepherd.

- Why might Jesus have thought that? (the people were lost and without a leader or protector)
- Jesus knew that he was going to be a leader for them but also that he wouldn't be with them for long, so what did Jesus decide to do? (he gave his friends/disciples power to help them).

- What did Jesus send his disciples to do? (heal the sick, raise the dead, teach others about him).
- We are also Jesus's followers, aren't we? Can we do those things? (some of them).
- When we try to help people feel better and we talk about Jesus are we caring for others too?

Response

- Ask: can you think of a time when you have worked with others to get the job done.
- Is it easier to do some jobs, like wash up the dishes, when someone else helps?
- Do you think it is fair for one person to do all the work in the house while others do nothing?

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus said there are many people who need to know God, but not enough people prepared to tell others that God loves them and wants to help them.

What about you?

- When was the last time you helped Jesus by helping someone else?
- When you did that, were you sharing the Good News?
- What could you do this week to help others, to show God's love and act with compassion?

To illustrate this, sit the children in circles (or one large one) and then pass around in turn two or three objects with a smiley face on each (maybe in different directions so they have to pay attention). You could play some happy music in the background.

Remind them at the end, that when they are kind, they are passing God's love around the world.

We Believe

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

- Do you believe in God the Father?
- Do you believe in God the Son, Jesus, who came to call people to God?
- Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit, who inspires people today to follow Jesus?

We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: 'The first disciples trusted in your care and we know we can too, and so we pray...'

Leader: for the Church: that we will share Jesus' message with other people, Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: for the spirit of love in our hearts, that we will be more loving to others, Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: for hope so that we can see the ways in which God is with us, Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: for those who are ill or in pain, that they may be healed or comforted, Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: for those who have died and those who miss them, Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord, help us to walk with you always. We make our prayers through Christ our Lord.
All: **Amen.**