

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A – 23rd February 2020

Introduction

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells His disciples to "love" their enemies and to "pray for those who are unkind to them."

Penitential Act

Ask the children to think about how they have behaved in the past week. Ask them if they have always been kind and helpful to others, obedient to their parents, listened to their teachers etc.

Lead the children in singing the "sorry song".

We are sorry,
Truly sorry,
Heal us Lord,
In Your love,
Help us to do better,
Help us to be kinder. (sung to tune of Frere Jacques)
Forgive us,
Forgive us.

Gloria (sung)

Choose a children's version of the Gloria from one of our listed Children's Liturgy Resource books, or you may have another CL resource. You will probably want to practice your chosen Gloria and use it every week so that everyone becomes familiar with it.

All stand to welcome the Gospel singing the **Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia, Alleluia
Jesus said,
You must love:
"Love God with all your heart.
and your neighbour as yourself." (same tune as above)
Alleluia, Alleluia.

Gospel

Select the correct Gospel from the Children's Lectionary. This week it's on page 81 of "Sunday. Book of Readings. The Lectionary Adapted for Children." (Year A)

Matthew 5:43-48

"A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew".

Explain and demonstrate – make three crosses: one on your forehead, one on your lips and one on your heart (in this way we think God's word, speak God's word and keep God's word in our hearts) **as we say together "Glory to You, O Lord."**

Read the Gospel aloud to the children. At the end say: **"The Gospel of the Lord"**.

All reply: **"Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ"**. Ask everyone to be seated.

Lead a Discussion on the Gospel

What did Jesus say to His disciples in today's Gospel?
(Jesus said that we must love our enemies and pray for those who are not kind to us).

Is this easy to do? How do we usually feel about people who are mean to us? (We often dislike these people. Sometimes we feel like being mean to them because this is the way they have treated us, but this is not God's way of behaving). Discuss with the children examples from their own lives.

Do we find it difficult to like people who are good to us and treat us well? (No. It is easy to be good to those who are good to us! God wants us to be better than this. Again – discuss with the children examples from their lives).

How do we "love" our enemies? Discuss with the children.
(Don't treat them as they treat you. Be kind, and don't say bad things about them. Forgive them from your heart as God forgives you and remember to pray for them).

Prayers of the Faithful (optional/ time dependent)

You may wish to prepare some of these yourselves or ask the children for their prayers. Here are some suggestions for today:

Dear God,

Thank you for Your love and forgiveness.
Help us to always show our love for You by the way we live our daily lives.

Lord, in Your mercy.
All reply: **“Hear our prayer.”**

Dear Jesus,

Through Your grace,
Help us to forgive our enemies as You forgive us.

Lord, in Your mercy.
All reply: **“Hear our prayer.”**

Closing Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for your unending love for us. May our lives be examples of that love to others as we continue the work of your first disciples.

Amen.

Now ask for volunteers for the Offertory Procession. After the procession, children return quietly to sit with their families in church.