

Fourth Sunday of Easter Year A– 30thApril 2023

Introduction

In today's gospel we hear that Jesus speaks to the people in parables about the good shepherd and his sheep.

Make the Sign of the Cross – a sign of the love God has for us. (This is optional, as we have already done this at the start of Holy Mass, but for young children it helps to demonstrate and practice how to do this correctly.

Light the candles on the table next to the Lectionary. An adult lights the candles).

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, (sung to tune of Frere Jacques)
In Your love,
Help us to do better,
Help us to be kinder.
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:**

(Sing to the tune of "If you're happy and you know it.")

Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord,

As we listen to the story,
Let us praise Him for His glory.
Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord.(1)

Gospel

Select the correct Gospel from the Children's Lectionary. This week it's on pages 53 of "Sunday. Book of Readings. The Lectionary Adapted for Children." (Year A)

John 10:1-5,10

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

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

The Gospel story was confusing to the people who heard Jesus tell it.

Who do the sheep follow in this story?
(The shepherd)

What job does a shepherd have?

-He cares for and nurtures each and every sheep. He makes sure they are safe and have everything they need to lead a happy and healthy life.

How do they recognise him?

He comes through the gate not over the fence like the robbers. They know his voice and he knows each sheep.

Is there a voice that you can recognise without seeing the person? Being able to this is because you know that person really well and have heard their voice and seen them many times.

What is Jesus teaching us in this Gospel? Who is the shepherd like? (Jesus)

Who are the sheep like? (Us)

If we follow God's teaching and live our lives as He asks- we are like the sheep following the shepherd. He will look after us and make sure that we have everything that we need. If we make mistakes and tell Him we are sorry He will forgive us. His love is unending.

How can we follow Jesus?

Listen to the voices of our parents, carers, teachers etc. who we recognise and lead us to follow God's teachings.

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 Jesus, You are my shepherd. Help me to always stay close to You and follow all your ways.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply: **“Hear our prayer.”**

Dear Jesus,

Guide me always on the right path in life. When I am afraid – give me courage.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply: **“Hear our prayer.”**

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for being our good shepherd and taking care of each and every one of us. Please help me to hear your voice when You call me.

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

References

(1)The Complete Children’s Liturgy Book.Katie Thomson,published by Kevin Mayhew. P349.

