
Holy Family Year C – 29th December 2024

Vestment Colour: White

Introduction

Today is the Feast of the Holy Family.

The Gospel today reminds us of the journey the Holy Family made to Jerusalem that was a yearly event to celebrate the Jewish feast of Passover.

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, and in particular on this Feast of the Holy Family if they have been kind to family members, helpful to parents, brothers, or sisters, as well as being respectful to those out with their families by listening to their teachers etc. For the times when we have not behaved as we should, and especially when we have been disobedient or thoughtless towards our own family, we say sorry to God.

Lead the children in singing the “sorry song”. (sung to tune of Frere Jacques)

We are sorry,
Truly sorry,
Heal us Lord,
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.

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you; we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you.

We give you thanks for your great glory.

Lord God, heavenly King,

O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ,

only begotten Son,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

Son of the Father,

You take away the sins of the world:

have mercy on us;

You take away the sins of the world,

receive our prayer.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father:

have mercy on us.

For You alone are the Holy One,

You alone are the Lord,

You alone are the Most High,

Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of the Father.

Amen

All stand to welcome the Gospel singing (same tune as above) the **Gospel Acclamation**:

Alleluia, Alleluia
He is come
Born for us
Jesus, Lord and Saviour
Sleeping in a manger
Sing with joy
He is come!

Alternatively say

Alleluia, alleluia
Open our hearts oh Lord, that we may pay attention to the words of your son.
Alleluia

Gospel

Select the correct Gospel from the Children's Lectionary for Year C.

Luke 2:41-52

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

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

- Where was the Holy Family travelling to and why? (To Jerusalem - to celebrate the Jewish feast of Passover)
- What age was Jesus when they made this journey? (12 years old)
- What happened that made Mary and Joseph very worried? (They could not find Jesus as He had stayed behind in Jerusalem)
- How long did it take Mary and Joseph to find Jesus? (Three days!)
- Can you imagine how Mary and Joseph felt when they found Jesus? (Discuss with the children feelings such as relieved, happy, etc.)
- Ask the children to imagine being lost or if anyone has ever been lost? Ask how they felt when lost and when found.
- Where did Mary and Joseph find Jesus? (In the temple, speaking with the teachers and questioning them)
- What did Mary say to Jesus? (Mary asked why Jesus stayed in Jerusalem instead of returning home with his family)
- What did Jesus say? (Jesus said that they should know he was in His Father's house. Mary and Joseph did not understand that he meant the temple was His Heavenly Father's house).
- Was Jesus worried about being alone in Jerusalem? (No, He was quite at home in the temple in the care of His Heavenly Father!)

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,

Look after all of your family here on earth, especially those who are poor, homeless, hungry, or ill.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply:

“Hear our prayer.”

Dear Jesus,

You are our good shepherd, and we are your sheep. Keep us always close to You and never let us be lost or separated from you.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply:

“Hear our prayer.”

Closing Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

We thank You for our families, our brothers and sisters and those who care for us. We pray today for those who have nobody to care for them.

Amen.

Activity

If there is time, use resources to complete an activity with the children. Possible resources are listed at the end.

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

Useful resources

CAFOD at <https://cafod.org.uk/Children-s-Liturgy>

Children's Liturgy with Emily: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwnLJNMXemY>

Archdiocese of Dunkeld: <https://www.dunkelldiocese.co.uk/resources-for-children-liturgy/>

Search for page entitled 'Resources for Children's Liturgy'

The Liturgy of the Word with Children by Katie Thompson, publisher Kevin Mayhew