

Children's Liturgy of the Word



24TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A MATTHEW 18:21-25

PARENTS' BACKGROUND



The next three weeks the readings draw on the imagery of vineyards.

The parable we hear today has a fairly straightforward message: God, the owner of the vineyard, treats all his workers a just daily wage, regardless of when they arrived in the vineyard. Jesus' disciples were some of the 'last' in society: tax collectors, sinners and outcasts. As Matthew's original audience was probably made up of Jewish Christians, Matthew may have included this story to drive home the point that, although they came from pagan roots, Gentile Christians were entitled to full participation in the Christian community just as they were. Who in our days would the 'last' in society be, remember that they also are equal inheritors of the Kingdom of God.

As parents, we can recognise our own children in the squabbling of the workers, comparing what they have and making complaints. Children can tend to equate love with gifts and material things. This tendency can grow into a spirit of entitlement, which runs counter to the spirit of gratitude. Any effort we as parents can make to overcome this tendency, will help our children to recognise and accept the love that God gives so generously.

PREPARATION

Set aside a time when you won't be interrupted, and prepare a small prayer space for everyone – it could be around a green cloth on the floor or small table, or at the table. Include:

- a candle to light at the beginning of your time together
- a family bible with the Gospel reading open or bookmarked

For the activity described below, you will need a 'vine,' either drawn on a large piece of paper, or cut out of pieces of paper and stuck to the wall; the vine could have grapes on it and some leaves too. You will also need a 'grape' for each child, writing/drawing materials, and tape or blu-tak to attach the children's leaves to the vine.

WE LIGHT A CANDLE

(To the tune of Insy Winsy Spider)

*We can be like candles, lighting up the world
helping everyone to see how we can love the Lord*

*Smiling, happy, full of love,
we are one family*

*We shine our light so all will know
that God loves you and me.*



WE SAY SORRY

- Lord Jesus, you act with fairness and justice, Lord have mercy.
All: Lord, have mercy.
- You reach out the strong and the weak, Christ have mercy.
All: Christ, have mercy.
- You will lead us to God's Kingdom, Lord have mercy.
All: Lord, have mercy.

GLORIA

WE PRAY

God in heaven, help us to follow your law of love through showing your love to other people. Amen.

SETTING THE SCENE

Ask what we can remember of last Sunday's Gospel.

Ask if there have been times when we have thought, 'That's not fair!' about something? How does it make us feel when we think things are not fair? This week we listen to a parable told by Jesus which makes us think again about what is truly fair...

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

(to the tune of Row Row Row your boat...)

Praise, praise, praise the Lord
praise our Father dear
As we listen to His Word
feel His Spirit near!

GOSPEL

(Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16.)

(You may like to read from your favourite family bible, or a children's bible at home.)

<https://youtu.be/L2HhO2jrMe4>

<https://youtu.be/rXUm1XqBMKU>

<https://youtu.be/jO42dmFpj7k>

Reader:

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

(God be in my mind, God be in my words, God be in my heart.)

At the end of the Gospel: The Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



REFLECTION ON THE READING

Ask the children: What did you hear? Let your child(ren) respond in their own words and then build up a discussion from there. Some of these questions below may be helpful.

- Why were the people who were hired first cross when they were paid?
- Did the people hired last need the same amount of money to live as the people hired first? How do you think the people hired last in the story felt when they were paid?
- What do you think will happen to people who come to know about God and to follow God later in their lives? Should they be able to belong to God's family as much as those of us who have known about God since we were small? Of course!

RESPONSE

Give one 'grape' to each child and ask him/her to draw or write something they are thankful to God for. Invite the children to come forward, one at a time, and attach their "grapes" to the 'vine.'

ACT OF FAITH

Relating to the Creed what you have shared with the children, ask this series of questions and invite the children to reply, 'I do.'

- Do you believe in God, who is a generous and loving God?
- Do you believe in Jesus who teaches us to treat others the way they should be treated?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who gives us the strength to be kind and generous to others?

WE PRAY

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying,

'God, the vineyard owner, is always with us, and so we now pray...'

Invite the children to offer prayers of the Faithful. The 5-finger prayer from Pope Francis may help. Help children to include others in their prayers, after each offering, repeat it, and add, "...and for all who...."

Here are some suggestions:

- We pray for the Church, that we may continue the work of Jesus.
- We pray for the world, that countries may work together to make sure all people have what they need to live full lives.

- We pray for a spirit of love in the hearts of all people gathered here today.
- We pray for those in our world who are 'last' and left out in any way.
- Lord, help us not only to keep from being envious, but also to share your generosity with others.

All. Lord, hear our prayer.

We make all these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

