



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

700 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 1C7

Children's Liturgy of the Word

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

This Sunday's readings continue the theme of the past Sundays of "call and response" and preaching the message, leading us to the miracle stories of Jesus. The reading from Job speaks of the sufferings of the human condition. The healings in our Gospel passage respond to that.

In the Gospel, Mark combines the themes of healing and preaching. Jesus, after healing many, tells his disciples he must "go to other towns to proclaim the Good News there also." In short, our call focuses on preaching the Good News of healing and salvation found in Christ.

Jesus comes to serve a world that suffers and is in pain. His healing touch lifts Peter's mother-in-law. Jesus heals so many spiritually and physically that he needs to escape to pray. Jesus knows spiritual healing is our deepest need.

Ideas and ethics do not make one a Christian. It is only through encounters with the person of Jesus that our life transforms as a disciple of Jesus. Belief in Jesus cannot be separated from living the Christian life: living in community, serving others, and forgiveness. While we hope that God's justice will eventually fill the earth, we dedicate our work to spreading the Christian message of love and justice to people living today.

Objectives

- † To introduce children to the healing Jesus and the kingdom of God.
- † To share with children that Jesus' mission is to heal those who suffer and are ill.

Leader's Preparation:

- † Pray the Lectionary readings.
- † Review the background.
- † Reflect upon the reflection questions.

Environment and Materials

- † Two screened adult leaders.
- † Liturgical space: the liturgical colour is **Green**.
- † White cloth, Lectionary and a candle.
- † Place the Bible in a prominent location for the children to see.
- † Select volunteers (older children or adults) to proclaim the readings.

Background

First Reading: Job

- † Job is one of the best-known characters in the Old Testament.
- † While many speak of the "patience of Job," he is a complainer who does not accept easy explanations for his suffering.
- † The book of Job deals with innocent suffering, trying to move beyond the simple belief that God rewards or punishes actions.
- † God points out that Job is a good person, to which Satan replies that Job is good because of his rewards, not for God's genuine love.
- † As the tale goes, God allows Satan to test Job.
- † While Job refuses to blame God for his calamity, he nevertheless calls on God to explain why he must suffer so much.
- † Job's friend tells him he must have done something wrong (sinned).
- † In the end, God denounces Job's friends and their theories of divine retribution but also teaches Job that he cannot call God to account.
- † God restores Job's fortunes, giving him more than he ever had and an additional 140 years to enjoy life, which is an analogy of God's generous love.
- † In the last line, Job addresses God, asking God to remember him. That typical prayer in the Scriptures usually implies a plea for God's mercy and compassion.

Gospel: Mark

- † Jesus continues his intensive activity of healing and casting out demons.
- † The first healing miracle is that of Simon's mother-in-law.
- † Earlier, when Jesus cast out a demon in the synagogue, the response was that everyone was amazed.
- † When healed, she "waited on them," a phrase which can also be translated as "ministered to them."
- † As the word that is also the root of the English word deacon, this is the same word that Mark used for the angels' ministry to Jesus in the wilderness.

- † Mark's subsequent use of the word will be in 10:45, where Jesus teaches that the greatest must "serve."
- † Waiting on them signifies evidence that she is healed and demonstrates her response of discipleship: she who was healed responded in ministry to others.
- † This goes significantly beyond the astonishment of those who heard Jesus' preaching in the synagogue.
- † The other side was Jesus' sense of being driven to mission.
- † Preaching the Gospel through teaching and healing was the sole purpose of his life: "For this purpose have I come."

Leader's Reflection Questions

- † What healing have you experienced in your own life?
- † How has it enabled you to minister to others?
- † Who needs your compassion and your healing touch?

The Liturgy

Procession from the main Church

After the opening prayer, when all are seated, the leaders come forward and stand facing the altar.

Priest: Dear children, God speaks to each of you in the Scriptures in ways that only God knows you need to hear. Go now to hear God's voice.

When most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the place of the celebration. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the location of the celebration, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

Welcome.

The leaders assist the children to sit and prepare. Begin with the Sign of the Cross. Help the children think about and connect their actions as they touch their foreheads, shoulders, and stomachs. The leader may say the following prayer in these or similar words.

**Loving God, you invite us to follow you. Help us to listen to your voice.
Amen.**

Invite the children to listen to the Gospel.

First Reading

The children sit during the proclamation of the reading.

A reading from the book of Job.

Job spoke to his friends:

"Does not the human being have a hard life on earth,
and are not their days like the days of a labourer?

Like a worker who longs for the shadow
and like labourers who want to receive their pay,
I receive months of emptiness,
and nights of misery are apportioned to me.

When I lie down, I say, 'When shall I rise?'

The night is long,
and I am full of tossing until dawn.

My days pass quickly
and end without hope.

"My life is a breath;
my eye will never again see good."

The Word of the Lord.

Children: Thanks be to God

Gospel

The children stand for the Gospel. The leader proclaims the Gospel. All sign themselves on the forehead, lips and chest. Minister of the Word: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark. All sign themselves on the forehead, lips and chest.

Children respond: Glory to you, O Lord

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel, according to Mark

Jesus and his disciples entered Simon and Andrew's house with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed by demons. And the whole town was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus went out to pray.

Simon and his companions looked for Jesus. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the other towns so that I may proclaim the message there also, for that is what I came to do."

And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

At the end of the Gospel, the Minister of the Word proclaims The Gospel of the Lord.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Children: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The children sit to listen to the reflection.

Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Please consider the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions.

An excellent place to begin is the question:

What did you hear?

Today, we hear another story of Jesus healing someone. Peter's mother-in-law was ill and in bed. Jesus went to heal her. He went into the house and took her by the hand. He probably said a prayer and asked God to help her. When he did that, she got better! She felt so much better and quickly served everyone something to eat.

When the people heard about this story, what did they do?

Everyone in the town who was sick went to the house where Jesus stayed. They stood outside the door and asked Jesus to make them well.

What do you think Jesus did?

He prayed and asked God to make these people better, to cure their diseases. And God did. Many in that town were healed!

Jesus was very tired. He left the house and went to someplace quiet. Jesus wanted to remind us that it is good to help others and do good work, but praying is also important. When we pray, we think about what God wants us to do. We can thank God for being with us and helping us. We can ask God to keep us strong and ready to do more good work.

While Jesus prayed, Peter came and told Jesus everyone was looking for him. After praying, Jesus was ready to get to work again. He told Peter they had to go to many more towns and places and help the people there. Jesus helped many, many people.

We can follow Jesus's example and help those who need us. And remember to pray. That is what Jesus did. That is what we must do, too.

Illness and pain help us to be open to God's healing power. It is not a punishment but allows us see God in our lives differently. Suffering and God's compassion are sources we can use to help us reach out to people in need.

Jesus came to teach us about God's kingdom. He said it would be a place where there would be no more sickness or suffering. He gave us an example of what that would be like when he cured people who were sick.

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess their faith.

Recite the Creed or use the sample below to ask the children to respond.

The Creed

Depending on the time, a simple profession of faith may be made (see below).

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

All: We do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who became our brother and gave his life for us?

All: We do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and gives us everlasting life?

All: We do believe.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it.

Prayer of the Faithful

Invite the children to think of the needs of others and to announce their petitions. The leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. It may be necessary for the leader to repeat and paraphrase the petition and conclude it with the cue for the response: For this, we pray. All respond to each petition by saying: Lord, hear our prayer. Sample intercessions are below.

Leader: Having listened to the Scriptures, let us call on God with happy hearts for our needs. Our response is: Lord, hear our prayer. **R./**

Lector: For the world, that we try to bring healing to others, we pray: **R./**

For the broken-hearted, that they know God's healing through a friend, we pray: R./

For nurses and doctors, that they experience God's love in their work, we pray: R./

The leader may invite other intercessions from the children or add intercessions based on the Church's current needs, the world, or the local community.

Lector: That those who have died live in God's Light forever, we pray:

Leader: Jesus, our healer, when we suffer, take our hand and heal us. Strengthen us to serve and follow you. Amen.

The leader may invite other intercessions from the children or add intercessions based on the Church's current needs, the world, or the local community.

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and think about what they have heard and are now doing.

Be mindful of children having difficulty finding their families.

Readings: Lectionary Sundays and Solemnities, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Ottawa, ON, adapted for children.
Children's Bulletin: thekidsbulletin.com. Used with permission
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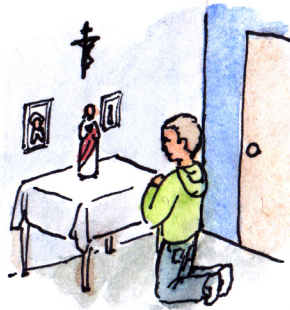
Spending Time with God



In today's Gospel reading, Our Lord went to Simon and Andrew's house, where He spent the evening healing the sick and casting out demons.

But early the next morning before the sun came up He went away into the wilderness to pray.

At first we wonder why Jesus would have to pray- He is God, after all! But He was also human so He needed to take some time to be with His Heavenly Father. And that is what real praying is- it's being with God and talking to Him and listening to Him.



Like Jesus, we also need to spend time with God. Even if we are always doing His work, like helping people or studying His truths, we still need to take some time to talk with Our Father in Heaven. Starting today, take a few

minutes every day to go to a quiet place and talk with God.

Answers to picture puzzle: top:5, 2, middle: 4, 6, bottom:1, 3.

The Kids' Bulletin

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 4th, 2024

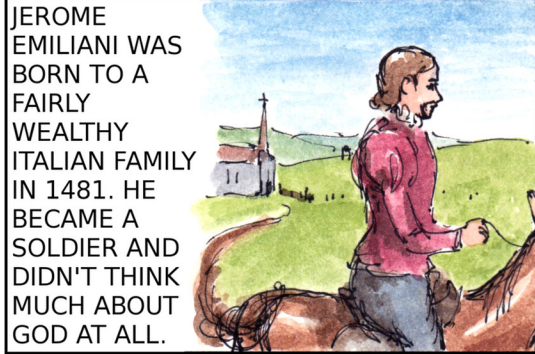


At the end of today's Gospel reading, Jesus tells Simon that they will go to the nearby villages to preach.

Can you find your way through the maze to the nearby village?

Saint Jerome Emiliani

February 8

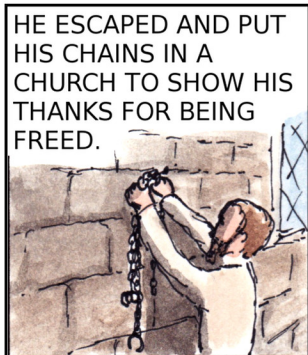


JEROME EMILIANI WAS BORN TO A FAIRLY WEALTHY ITALIAN FAMILY IN 1481. HE BECAME A SOLDIER AND DIDN'T THINK MUCH ABOUT GOD AT ALL.

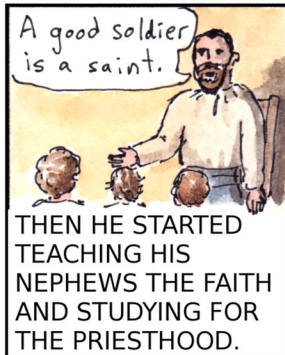


BUT WHEN HE WAS CAPTURED AND THROWN IN A DUNGEON HE TURNED TO GOD.

Why am I here?

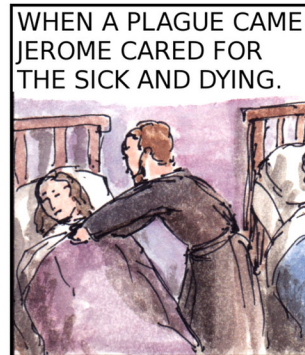


HE ESCAPED AND PUT HIS CHAINS IN A CHURCH TO SHOW HIS THANKS FOR BEING FREED.

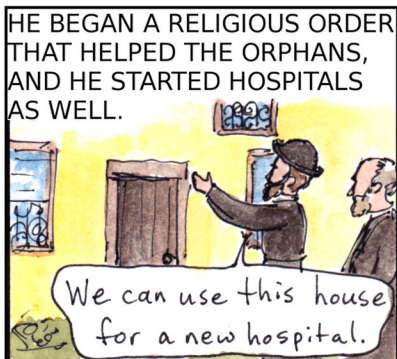


A good soldier is a saint.

THEN HE STARTED TEACHING HIS NEPHEWS THE FAITH AND STUDYING FOR THE PRIESTHOOD.

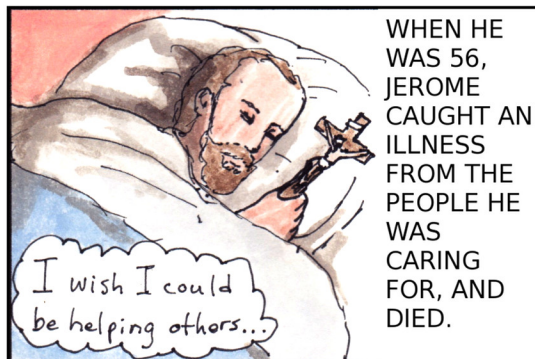


WHEN A PLAGUE CAME JEROME CARED FOR THE SICK AND DYING.



HE BEGAN A RELIGIOUS ORDER THAT HELPED THE ORPHANS, AND HE STARTED HOSPITALS AS WELL.

We can use this house for a new hospital.



WHEN HE WAS 56, JEROME CAUGHT AN ILLNESS FROM THE PEOPLE HE WAS CARING FOR, AND DIED.

I wish I could be helping others...

AT FIRST SAINT JEROME ONLY FOUGHT FOR HIS OWN GLORY. THEN HE CAME TO SEE THAT THERE WAS ANOTHER, BIGGER FIGHT: TO CONQUER HIS OWN WILL AND TO LOVE OTHERS. WE CAN LEARN FROM HIS EXAMPLE TO OVERCOME OUR SELFISHNESS AND CARE FOR THE PEOPLE AROUND US WHO ARE SUFFERING.

Sort-out-the-Pictures:

An Evening and Morning with Jesus

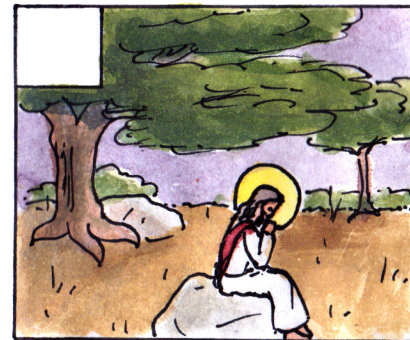
What happened in today's Gospel reading? See if you can sort out the order of these pictures by putting the numbers 1 to 6 in the boxes.



Everyone is looking for You!



Be healed.



Let us go on to the nearby villages...



My mother-in-law is ill.



Next morning...