



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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

Children's Liturgy of the Word FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The focus of today's readings is the teaching authority of Jesus.

Authority, authenticity, and author all share the same root word, which means "creator" and carries connotations of accepting responsibility for the content of that which is created. Jesus taught with authority, as an author, the one responsible for the covenant, God.

The prophets of the Old Testament were "the voice of God" and, as such, commanded obedience. In our passage for today, God promises the people of Israel a future prophet who, like Moses, will come from among their own people. But with this promise, God issues a stern warning to obey the prophet's voice.

The New Testament sees Jesus as that future prophet who teaches with "real authority." He not only speaks for God but demonstrates his authority with power. The exorcism of evil spirits serves as an example of the authority of Jesus: "He teaches with real authority...even the evil spirits obey him."

Objectives

- † To affirm the authority of Jesus.

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: Deuteronomy

- † Today's reading comes from a section that describes positions of public authority in Israel, including royal, juridical, and priestly offices.
- † The similarity is that they were solidly established, permanent in their position of power, and could easily value the preservation of their status over responding to changing circumstances and the needs of the people.
- † While the right to hold the other offices was clearly delineated, the people questioned how they would discern the authenticity of a prophet.
- † Moses responded that the prophet would not be extraordinary, but one from their kin: one whose teaching would be like Moses' own.
- † The prophet would be "raised " by God with the authority to speak in God's name and, therefore, could command their listening.

Gospel: Mark

- † The authority of Jesus' proclamation of the nearness of the reign of God is now made evident in his authority over the unclean spirit.
- † Mark can hardly say enough about the people's response to Jesus.
- † They were astonished; they publicized him to spread his fame throughout the region.
- † Looking at the message of today's readings, we first hear Moses remind us that God will freely choose servants through whom to speak.
- † The only extraordinary thing about them will be the authority behind their message.
- † Mark then presents Jesus in the line of the prophets rather than the established teachers or authorities.

Leader's Reflection Questions

- † In your role as prayer leader for the Liturgy of the Word with children, you are helping to share the Good News. In what other ways are you living out your call to follow Jesus?
- † How is Jesus the Lord of your life? What is Jesus commanding you to do today?

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, we send you forth from this community to hear how God calls you to live as a prophet by following Jesus, who speaks with authority. Go now in peace with our blessing to always love and support you as you listen to 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 Deuteronomy

The Lord said to Moses:

I will choose one of their own people to be a prophet like you. I will give my message to that prophet, who will tell the people exactly what I have said.

That prophet will speak in my name, and anyone who doesn't obey the message will have to answer to me.

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 Matthew

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 went to the town of Capernaum. Then, on the next Sabbath, he went into the Jewish meeting place and started teaching.

Everyone was amazed at his teaching. He taught with authority and not like the teachers of the Law of Moses.

Suddenly, a man with an evil spirit in him entered the meeting place and yelled, "Jesus from Nazareth, what do you want with us? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are! You are God's Holy One."

Jesus told the evil spirit, "Be quiet and come out of the man!" The spirit shook him. Then it gave a loud shout and left.

Everyone was amazed and kept saying to each other, "What is this? It must be some new kind of powerful teaching! Even the evil spirits obey him." News about Jesus quickly spread all over that part of Galilee.

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?

Do you know what authority is?

Who do you know has authority?

(You may need to explain what the word means.)

If someone has authority over you, that usually means you listen to and obey them. Your parents have authority over you. You should obey when your mom or dad tells you to do something.

Can you think of other examples?

When Jesus was alive, he never travelled far because he had to walk everywhere. He seemed like an ordinary man from a small town, Nazareth. For some reason, every time people heard what Jesus taught and saw the miracles and healing acts, they were amazed. He didn't sound ordinary when discussing how God loved us and wanted us to love him, too. He didn't act like an ordinary person when he helped those who were sick or hungry. His popularity was growing.

Today, we hear that everyone listened to Jesus. They all said he was the best speaker they ever heard. He was even better than some crucial people who taught them before. While Jesus was speaking, a man who was very ill came into the meeting place. He was shouting and interrupting Jesus. Jesus knew that something inside him was making him act this way. Jesus looked at the man, and just by talking to him and telling the bad spirits to leave him, the man was cured.

Why do you think the people were amazed by Jesus?

Well, people could not believe what they saw! They began to wonder who this man Jesus was. He was so impressive in his words and actions; he must be very powerful. The people wanted to share what they saw with their friends and neighbours. They began to tell the story about Jesus to everyone they met. Jesus could heal the sick and command evil because he has supreme authority. That means no one on earth has authority over Jesus. He has authority over all of creation because he is God. The Scripture we heard today reveals to us again that Jesus was not just a man who could do extraordinary things. He has authority. We obey Jesus because he is God. That is truly something amazing.

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/or 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 Word of God, let us call on God with happy hearts for our needs.

Lector: That all children may have good people to care for them throughout their lives, we pray:

Lector: That we will always be gentle with others, we pray:

Lector: That those who suffer see hope in Jesus, we pray:

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: God our creator and our hope, Lord of the universe, look with kindness upon those for whom we pray and grant our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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 perhaps think about what they have heard and are now doing.

Be mindful of children having difficulty finding their families.

Readings: Lectionary for Masses with Children, 1992, USCCB, Washington, DC, USA.
Children's Bulletin: thekidsbulletin.com. Used with permission
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DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

Baby Jesus is Presented in the Temple

On February second we celebrate the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. That is the day that Saint Joseph and Our Lady took the baby Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem to consecrate Him to God. The Jews were supposed to dedicate their first-born sons to God, so Mary and Joseph were obedient to the law even though their Baby was God Himself!

This was a most amazing moment, even though almost nobody noticed it: here was the great Temple where the people came to worship God, and now God had actually come into it- as a little Baby! But only Mary and Joseph and the prophets Simeon and Anna knew what had happened.

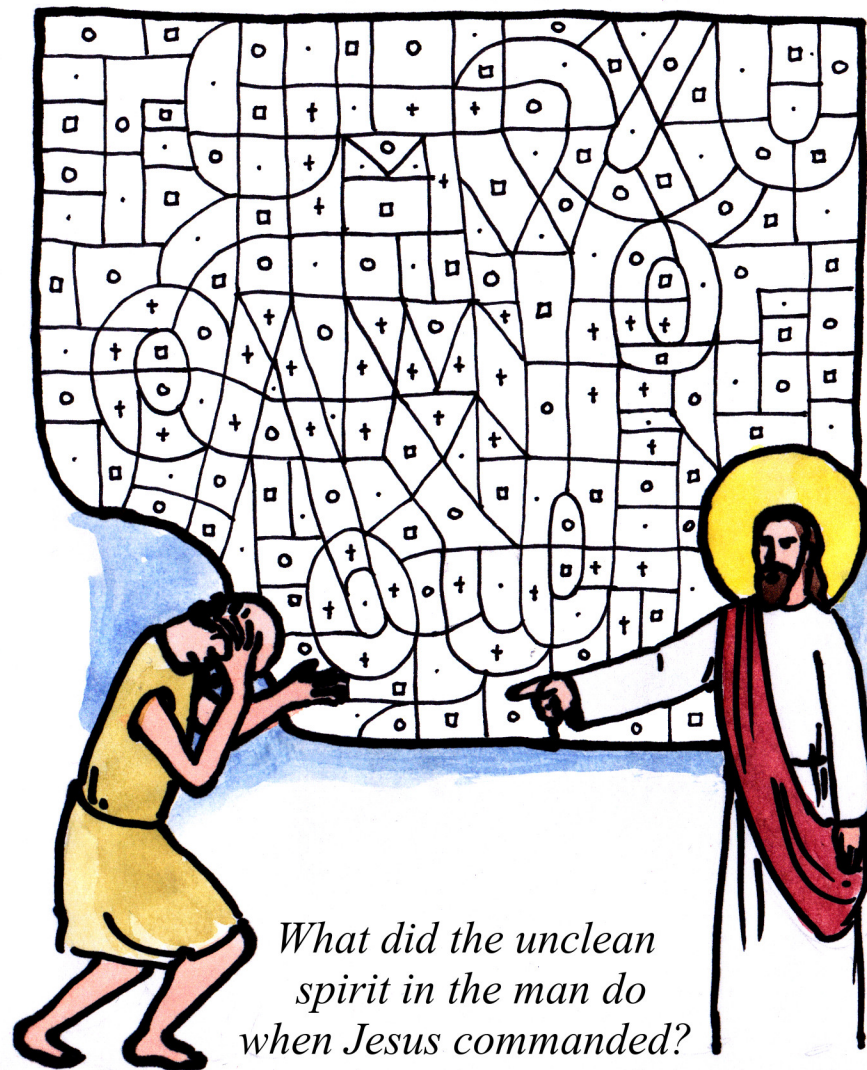
Saint Paul tells us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Every time you receive Holy Communion, it's like baby Jesus entering the Temple. When you go to Communion, remember that you know that amazing secret- that even though the rest of the world might not know, you have just received Jesus! What a special moment!



Answer to front page: it came out
Answers to Unscramble: man, Jesus,
destroy, holy, come, spirit, voice, they,
saying. AUTHORITV

The Kids' Bulletin

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 28th, 2024




What did the unclean spirit in the man do when Jesus commanded?

Colour in only the spaces that have crosses to find out what it did.

SAINT BRIGID OF KILDARE

FEBRUARY 1

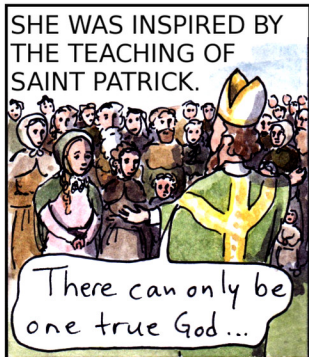
SAINT BRIGID WAS BORN AROUND THE YEAR 450 IN IRELAND. HER MOTHER WAS A CHRISTIAN SLAVE AND HER FATHER WAS A PAGAN CHIEFTAIN.



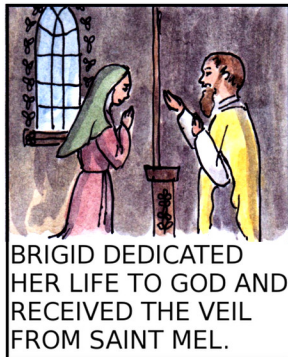
BRIGID WAS GENEROUS TO THE POOR AND GAVE AWAY HER FATHER'S FOOD.



SHE WAS INSPIRED BY THE TEACHING OF SAINT PATRICK.



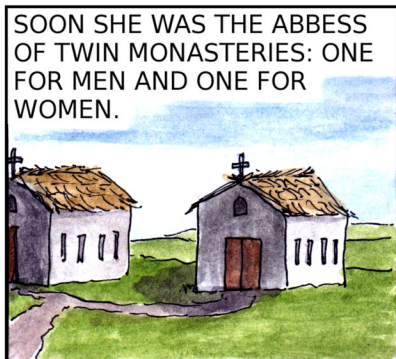
BRIGID DEDICATED HER LIFE TO GOD AND RECEIVED THE VEIL FROM SAINT MEL.



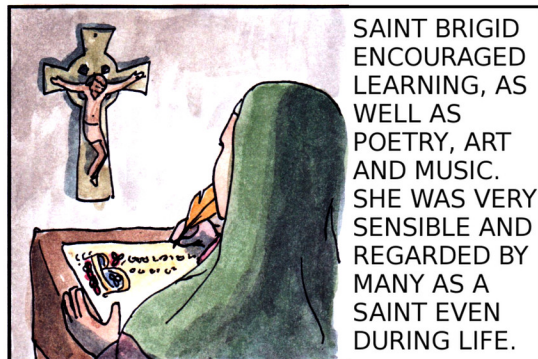
SHE WAS SOON JOINED BY MANY OTHER YOUNG WOMEN.



SOON SHE WAS THE ABBESS OF TWIN MONASTERIES: ONE FOR MEN AND ONE FOR WOMEN.



SAINT BRIGID ENCOURAGED LEARNING, AS WELL AS POETRY, ART AND MUSIC. SHE WAS VERY SENSIBLE AND REGARDED BY MANY AS A SAINT EVEN DURING LIFE.



SAINT BRIGID IS HELD IN GREAT HONOUR, ESPECIALLY IN IRELAND, WHERE SHE HELPED SO MANY PEOPLE COME TO GOD. AND YET ALL SHE DID WAS WHAT SHE OUGHT TO HAVE DONE-SHE SHARED FOOD, TAUGHT PEOPLE ABOUT THE TRUTH AND BEAUTY AND MOST OF ALL LOVED GOD. CAN YOU DO THE SAME?

Unscramble: Jesus Casts out a Demon

Sort out the letters to fill in the blanks.

Use the letters in the boxes to fill in the last row of boxes.

And immediately there was in their synagogue a ___ □ ___ (NMA) with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, ___ □ ___ (ESSJU) of Nazareth? Have you come to ___ □ ___ (YDSETRO) us? I know who you are, the □ ___ (OYLH) One of God."

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and ___ □ ___ (MEOC) out of him!" And the unclean ___ □ ___ (TRSIPI), convulsing him and crying with a loud ___ □ ___ (IOCEV), came out of him.

And □ ___ (YEHT) were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, ___ □ ___ (YSNIAG), "What is this? A new teaching!"

With □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ he commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."

