



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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

Children's Liturgy of the Word

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

This is a challenging Gospel for the children. It is action-packed. The action is meant to show that Jesus wants to replace the old way of worship—something children will not relate to.

The Temple that Jesus visited is the second Temple. The first Temple was constructed by King Solomon and the second under King Herod, but destroyed in 70 AD.

Today's readings remind us that Jesus had a great passion and love for the house of God. Nothing should distract us from the desire to be in God's presence and pray. That is a valuable lesson for all of us.

In the Temple, Jesus lashes out against greed and selfishness. He wants us to focus our lives on God and the things of God, revealing himself as the true "Temple."

Our hope for salvation is found in the Resurrection of Christ.

Objectives

- † Connect the church with Jesus.
- † Help children develop a sense of good church behaviour.

Background

- † John shares this story after the Temple was destroyed with post-resurrection eyes.
- † He wants the readers to recognize that Jesus is the new Temple where people meet God.
- † Jesus is our entry point into eternal life.

Leader's Reflection Questions

- † How do you relate Jesus to the church?
- † What questions do you have about the church?

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, go with your leaders and God, inviting us to listen to Jesus.

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.

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 John

Jesus went up to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of the Passover.

Inside the temple, he saw people selling cattle, sheep and pigeons. And there were others changing money for the people.

Jesus made a long whip and chased the cattle and the sheep out of the temple. He also knocked over the money tables, spilling coins on the ground.

He told those selling pigeons, "Get them out of here! Stop using God's house as a marketplace!"

The Jews there asked Jesus, "What gives you the right to do this? What sign can you give us?"

Jesus answered them, "Tear down this temple, and I will raise it up in three days!"

The Jews said, "It took us forty-six years to build this temple!" And you think you can raise it up in three days?"

But the temple Jesus was talking about was his body.

Later, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this, and they believed in him.

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?

Holy places like the church help us to get closer to God. For the Jewish people, like Jesus, their sacred building was the Temple.

Today's Gospel tells us about when Jesus went to the Temple to pray and found people acting in a way that did not respect the Temple. Jesus wasn't happy.

Does that sound strange that Jesus wasn't happy?

Jesus had many feelings like you and me. He didn't like it when people disrespected God or one another, especially in church.

Let's talk about what happens when you go to church.

How do people act when they are in church?

Are their voices quiet?

Can you name some behaviours that are not proper in Church?

People in charge at the Temple did not like what Jesus did. They demanded a reason from him. He tried to tell them that one day, he would die and rise from the dead.

How should we behave to follow Jesus so that we can be with him forever?

God loves us so much that he always wants us to be with him. Remember to always behave appropriately in church.

What are some ways to act when you are in church?

(walking respectfully, bowing, kneeling, folding hands, quiet)

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: Inspired by today's readings, let us call upon God for our needs. Our response is: Lord, hear our prayer. **R./**

Lector: For the Church, the sign of God in the world, that the Holy Spirit will be seen to live strongly there, we pray: **R./**

For the poor of the world and those who have nothing, 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: For the gift of prayer, we pray: **R./**

Leader: Loving and eternal God, you are all seeing and knowing; bless us and those for whom we pray in hope through Jesus 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 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.
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