



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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Children's Liturgy of the Word Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview

This week's readings show life with God as a journey along "the way." In the Old Testament readings, "the way" is a journey home from exile in Babylon. God gathers his displaced people and brings them back to the land of Israel. It's a familiar road. The Jews first walked it weeping after Israel's defeat by Babylon. Now, it is a path of joy and laughter as they set their hearts toward home.

As the Gospel indicates, early Christians sometimes referred to the lifelong journey of following Jesus as "the way." After the blind beggar, Bartimaeus receives his sight again, he follows Jesus "on the way."

When Jesus asks Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" Bartimaeus answers, "I want to see." In the Bible, sight means seeing with our eyes and understanding with our hearts. Bartimaeus gains both types of sight: he can see now and understands that Jesus is the Son of God.

Before healing him, Jesus says, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." This means Jesus has both healed and saved Bartimaeus. Instead of going his own way, Bartimaeus follows Jesus, becoming his disciple.

Leaders Reflections Question:

† What spiritual blindness do you want Jesus to heal?

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Background

Jeremiah 31:7-9 The Book of Jeremiah highlights the people's disobedience and exile, but it also contains a message of hope and restoration known as the "Book of Comfort." This section expresses gratitude for God's promise to restore the exiled people, emphasizing their weakness compared to God's strength and faithfulness. Their return is based solely on God's love, not their merit. Jeremiah portrays God as a consoler and shepherd, guiding the vulnerable—like the blind, lame, and pregnant women—ensuring they have a future simply because he chooses them.

Psalms 126 This psalm highlights remembrance of God's past saving actions and hope for the future. It recalls the return of exiles from Babylon, showing how God can create something wonderful from disaster. Despite harsh punishment, the people recognize the joy of being in God's presence, confident that He will restore their fortunes and fill them with joy once more.

Hebrews 5:1-6 After God instructed Moses to appoint Aaron and his sons as priests, the priesthood became hereditary (Exodus 28:1-5, 29:29). Because Jesus was not of the priestly class, the author of the Letter to the Hebrews asserts that his priesthood was appointed by God. While there are similarities between Aaron and Jesus, the contrasts are more significant. The author emphasizes Christ's surpassing greatness, citing Psalm 2:7, "You are my son: / this day I have begotten you," highlighting that Christ is God's begotten Son. He also cites Psalm 110:4, "You are a priest forever / according to the order of Melchizedek," indicating that Christ's priesthood is superior, eternal, and bestowed by God the Father.

Mark 10:46-52 In Mark's Gospel, the healing of Bartimaeus symbolizes the disciples' gradual understanding of Jesus' mission. This is Mark's second account of healing a blind man, with the first featuring a two-part healing process. Jesus predicts his passion between these healings, highlighting the disciples' confusion. Bartimaeus, acknowledging Jesus as the "Son of David," calls out for help despite the crowd's attempts to silence him. His faith surpasses their objections, and he responds by asking for healing instead of money, demonstrating the insight and courage that the disciples struggle to achieve.

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: (in these or similar words)

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.

Dear children, our lives are a journey with Jesus. Go with your leaders to listen to Jesus.

Welcome.

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

O God,

Come, Holy Spirit, fill us with your presence.

Amen.

Invite the children to listen to the readings. Proclaiming all the readings is unnecessary; however, the Gospel is required.

First Reading

A reading from the Book of the prophet Jeremiah.

The Lord says:

"Celebrate and rejoice for Israel, the greatest nation of all.

Offer praises and shout,

'Rescue your people, Lord!

Save what is left of Israel.'

"I will bring my people back from that country in the north
and from everywhere else.

The blind and the lame will be there.

Expectant mothers and women about to give birth
will return and be a part of that great crowd.

"They will cry and pray as I bring them home.

They won't stumble as I will lead them along a level road
to streams of water.

"I am a father to Israel,
and they are my favourite children."

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

The word of the Lord.

Children: Thanks be to God.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

Responsorial Psalm

R. The Lord has done great things for us.

It seemed like a dream
when the Lord brought us back
to the city of Zion.

We celebrated with laughter
and joyful songs. **R**

Our Lord, we ask you to bless
your people again,
and let us be like streams
in the southern desert.

We cried as we went out
to plant our seeds.

Now, let us celebrate
as we bring in the crops. **R**

We cried on our way
to plant our seeds,
but we will celebrate and shout
as we bring in the crops. **R**

Second Reading

A reading from a letter to the Hebrews.

Brothers and sisters:

Every high priest is appointed to help others
by offering gifts and sacrifices to God because of their sins.

A high priest has weaknesses of his own,
and he feels sorry for weak and foolish people.

That is why he must offer sacrifices for his own sins
and for the sins of others.

But no one can have the honour of being a high priest
simply by wanting to be one.

Only God can choose a priest
and God is the one who chose Aaron.

That is how it was with Christ.

He became a high priest,

but not just because he wanted the honour of being one.

It was God who told him,

"You are my Son, because today I have become your Father!"

In another place, God says,

"You are a priest forever, just like Melchizedek."

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

The word of the Lord.

Children: Thanks be to God.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

Gospel

The children stand for the Gospel. They sign themselves on the forehead, lips, and chest.

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel, according to Mark.

Jesus and his disciples went to Jericho.

As they were leaving, a large crowd followed them.

A blind beggar named Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus, was sitting beside the road.

When he heard it was Jesus from Nazareth, he shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!"

Many people told the man to stop, but he shouted all the louder, "Son of David, have pity on me!"

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him over!"

They called out to the blind man and said, "Don't be afraid! Come on! He is calling for you."

The man threw off his coat, jumped, and ran to Jesus. Jesus asked: "What do you want me to do for you?"

The blind man answered, "Master, I want to see!"

Jesus told him, "You may go. Your eyes are healed because of your faith."

Right away, the man could see, and he went down the road with Jesus.

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

The Gospel of the Lord.

Children: Glory to you, O Lord.

Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Remember 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?

Blind people cannot see or cannot see as well as sighted people do. In Jesus' time, a blind man would have been very poor because he would not have been able to work, move around freely, or have a productive life like a blind person today could. The blind man Bartimaeus in today's Gospel would have wanted desperately to be able to see. A healthy vision would have transformed his life from a poor beggar to a man who could support himself and his family.

We hear that as Bartimaeus was sitting by the road, he heard something going on. He heard people around him say that Jesus was coming. Bartimaeus had heard of Jesus and his miracles and knew that Jesus could heal him.

How do you imagine Bartimaeus' reaction when he heard that Jesus was coming?

He must have been excited and glad! He called out to Jesus, shouting, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!" People told him to stop shouting, but he didn't give up and kept calling out to Jesus. So finally, when Jesus heard him, he called Bartimaeus to him. Bartimaeus asked to be healed, and Jesus healed him. Bartimaeus stayed with Jesus and became one of his followers. For the first time, Bartimaeus could clearly see every-thing around him.

We see ourselves in Bartimaeus. We want to be near Jesus, and we want him to heal us of our hurts- whether those are physical or spiritual. Jesus also calls to us. He doesn't call us with a voice our ears hear, like when moms and dads call us to dinner. But Jesus calls to us in our souls. In our hearts, we feel Jesus' presence. We are called to stay with Jesus as Bartimaeus stayed with him. When we walk with Jesus, we gratefully love him and live our lives in service like he did when he was here on earth. We also love and serve those around us. All of us can serve in different ways because we all possess different gifts. Our world would not be as bright a place if everyone had the same gifts.

What gifts do you have?

Some of us might be good at welcoming new students so they feel comfortable on their first day of school. Others might be observant and help when someone is struggling or pick something up that was dropped. We may be good at washing the dishes or taking out the trash at home. We all have different gifts to offer in service to Jesus. Think of a few ways you might use those gifts to kindly serve others this week.

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: I believe.

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

All: I believe.

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

All: I believe.

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

Prayer of the Faithful

Leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. The leader may need to repeat and paraphrase the petition and conclude it with the cue for the response: we pray. All respond to each petition by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer." Sample intercessions are below.

Leader: Let us pray to our God for our needs. **R. Lord, hear our prayer.**

Lector: For leaders in the Church.
Let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Lector: For our family, we serve one another.
Let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Lector: For the sick. Let us pray to the Lord **R.**

Lector: For the dead. Let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

The leader may invite other intercessions from the children.

Leader: God, you care for your people. Hear our prayers to you through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

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.

Did You Know?

The Liturgy of the Word

The Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist are the two primary parts of the Mass and are intimately connected. The Liturgy of the Word includes the Readings, Homily, Profession of Faith, and the Universal Prayer (or Prayer of the Faithful). The children remain in a separate space until after the Prayer of the Faithful.

In the Liturgy of the Word, Christ himself, the Word made flesh, is present in the proclamation of Scripture (both Old and New Testaments). These ancient and holy texts are traditionally proclaimed from the ambo, the table of the Word-as the altar is the table of the Eucharist. This is where God speaks the truth of salvation to the gathered assembly.

The standard Lectionary always has four readings at Sunday Mass: the First Reading, the Responsorial Psalm, the Second Reading, and the Gospel. The First Reading usually comes from the Old Testament, except during Easter Time, when it comes from the Acts of the Apostles. The Responsorial Psalm is usually sung and comes from the Book of Psalms, although, sometimes, a Canticle from the Old or New Testaments is used. The Second Reading usually comes from the epistles, the letters found in the New Testament of the Bible. The Gospel Reading, preceded by the sung Gospel Acclamation (often "Alleluia"), always comes from one of the four accounts of the Gospel: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. First Reading

The prayer leader or a designated reader should proclaim the First Reading from the ambo. The children should be seated during the First Reading. The reader should introduce the reading by saying, "A reading from the [insert the name of the book]" and conclude the reading by saying, "The word of the Lord." Lead the children in saying the response: "Thanks be to God." It is important that you follow the liturgy because this is how you teach the children to participate fully in the Mass as they grow older.

All Saints

IN DESIGNATING one day on our calendar for all the saints, the Church chooses a time to honor our heroes—the men and women whose example we admire. Coming near the end of the Church year, the solemnity of All Saints invites us into the mystery of death and the promise of eternal life.

An early tradition placed the festival on May 13. According to one story, Pope Boniface IV (himself a saint) began the celebration in Rome. On that date in 609, he dedicated a very old building as a new church. The Pantheon had been built to honor all the pagan gods, but Boniface rededicated the building as a Christian church in the seventh century. He brought the relics of the martyrs from the catacombs to this famous public place of worship. The parade of relics changed the Pantheon from a place for worship of all the pagan gods to a place that honored Mary and all the Christian saints—and in turn the one Christian God. Eventually the idea of a feast of all saints was transferred to November 1, near the end of the Church year.

The Church honors many saints with a day of their own on the general liturgical calendar, but there are many more saints than those. Since Vatican II, the number of men and women canonized as saints has increased considerably. Although we do not celebrate all their names on specific dates in all our churches throughout the year, we do gather them as one on this day.

Secular tradition has turned the eve of All Saints (i.e., Halloween or All Hallows Eve) into a kind of anti-festival, a night when heroes of the underworld take command.

The Mass for All Saints Day always replaces the one for Ordinary Time, even when it falls on a Sunday.

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Written by Paul Turner.

All Souls

CRISP AUTUMN chill penetrates our sweater-wrapped bodies to remind us of our weakness before the power of nature. As leaves fall from trees, plants die, and animals retreat, we feel the impending threat of death, which waits to take us home.

During this season of the northern hemisphere's year, the Church celebrates the Commemoration of All Souls. As our bodies and minds resign themselves to the inevitable cessation of life, our Church calendar brings forth a somber feast to fit our temperament these increasingly darkened days.

All Souls comes as a sequel to that of All Saints. Having commemorated all the blessed who enjoy the face of God in their death, we turn our thoughts to the other souls who await the fullness of God's glory. The sequence of these two days implies a belief that those who have lived lives of holiness enjoy God's presence and can intercede for us before the throne of God. All Souls implies that others, having lived more sinful lives, still await that glory. These are the dead we remember every November 2—members of our families, friends, the lonely and forgotten, and public figures who have touched our lives. On this day, we pray that God will have mercy on them and grant them the vision of blessedness for which they longed.

The liturgy for this day still offers three Masses. When the Church created this feast in the Middle Ages, it became so popular that priests were given the unusual permission to celebrate three Masses that day. The permission remains, as do the separate texts for the Masses, even though not every parish takes advantage of the permission. The readings are drawn from the collection of texts we use for funerals.

When the Church gathers for prayer on November 2, we still remember the faithful departed, even when it falls on a Sunday. Those who assisted us in life receive assistance from us in their death. This commemoration celebrates our union with the church in every place and beyond all time.

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