



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

We always Hope in God's Mercy

Overview

Today's readings continue Jesus' teachings to the people, which began last Sunday. In it, Jesus tells us to love our enemies and do good to those cruel to us. In our first reading, King Saul is jealous of David, who is young and popular, and in his determination to kill David, he pursues him relentlessly. David spends many years on the run in the desert and wilderness regions of Zith. David is seen as a prefiguration of Jesus. Today's Gospel continues from last week. Providing practical details of how we are to behave contains the most challenging and difficult concept of Christian living for us to live out – love for those who are against us and forgiveness of those who hurt us. The Beatitudes call us to a radical reversal of response to situations in our lives – a response that turns our human nature upside down. God's way is a complete reverse of the world's way.

Leaders Reflection

- † Why does Jesus tell us to do this?
- † What does this tell us about what God is like and what God expects of us?

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Background

1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23 King Saul pursues David, hoping to kill him. One night, David and his companion Abishai sneak into Saul's camp and find him asleep with his spear nearby. Abishai urges David to kill Saul, but David refuses, believing it's wrong to harm God's anointed king. Instead, he takes Saul's spear and water jug to demonstrate his mercy. The following day, David calls out to Saul, showing the spear as evidence that he could have harmed him but chose not to. David emphasizes his faith in God and his commitment to righteousness over revenge.

Psalms 103 is a song of praise that highlights God's mercy, love, and forgiveness. The psalmist urges his soul to bless the Lord and remember His kindness. God forgives sins, heals, and shows compassion, being slow to anger and rich in mercy. It reassures us that God removes our sins as far as the East is from the West, emphasizing His limitless forgiveness and encouraging trust in His faithfulness, which brings hope and joy.

1 Corinthians 15:45-49 Paul contrasts Adam, the first man, with Jesus, the new Adam. Adam, created from the earth, reflects human weakness, while Jesus, the "last Adam," comes from heaven and offers new life. Paul explains that, like Adam, we initially have earthly bodies, but through Christ, we are transformed to share in His heavenly nature. This passage offers hope: while we were once weak and sinful like Adam, we will one day be transformed like Christ, destined for eternal life and glory with God in heaven.

Luke 6:27-38 Jesus teaches about love, mercy, and forgiveness, challenging his followers to love their enemies and do good to those who hurt them. He tells them to bless those who curse them and to turn the other cheek instead of seeking revenge. Jesus also teaches the Golden Rule: Do to others as you would have them do to you. He explains that true love is shown when we are kind, even to those who do not deserve it, just as God is merciful to everyone, both good and bad. Jesus calls his followers to be compassionate, forgiving, and generous, promising that God will bless those who live this way. The message is clear: be merciful, just as God is merciful.

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)

My dear children, have you ever heard of the Golden Rule? Go with your leaders and let Jesus teach you.

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 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.

Let us pray:

Loving God, thank You for bringing us together. Help us listen to Your Word and learn to love like Jesus. Open our hearts to be kind and forgiving. 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 first book of Samuel

One day, Saul took his best soldiers and went to look for David in the desert. That night, David and Abishai went into the camp. Saul was sleeping with his spear stuck in the ground near his head while Abner and the soldiers were sleeping all around him.

Abishai whispered to David, "This time, God has given you the chance to kill your enemy. I'll pin him to the ground with his own sword, and I won't have to try but once." David whispered back, "Don't kill him! The Lord will punish anyone who kills his chosen king." David took the spear and the water jar, and then the two men left. None of Saul's soldiers knew what had happened or even woke up because the Lord had made them all fall sound asleep.

David and Abishai crossed the valley and went to the top of the hill, where they were at a safe distance. David said, "Your Majesty, here is your spear. Have one of your young men come and get it. The Lord put you in my power today. But you are his chosen king, and I refused to harm you because the Lord rewards people who are honest and faithful.

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 is merciful and gracious

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits. **R**

The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities. **R**

Second Reading

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters,

"The first man, Adam, became a living being";

the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

But it is not the spiritual that is first,

but the physical, and then the spiritual.

The first was from the earth, made of dust;

the second is from heaven.

As was the one of dust, so are those who are of the dust;

and as is the one of heaven, so are those who are of heaven.

Just as we have borne the image of the one of dust,

we will also bear the image of the one of heaven.

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 Luke.

Jesus said to his disciples:

Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,
bless those who curse you,
pray for those who abuse you.

If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also;
and from anyone who takes away your coat,
do not withhold even your shirt.

Give to everyone who begs from you;
and if anyone takes away your goods,
do not ask for them again.

Do to others as you would have them do to you."

"If you love those who love you,
what credit is that to you?

For even sinners love those who love them.

If you do good to those who do good to you,
what credit is that to you?

For even sinners do the same.

But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return.

Your reward will be great, and you will be
children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.
Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged;
do not condemn, and you will not be condemned.

Forgive, and you will be forgiven;
give, and it will be given to you."

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:

Leader:

What did we hear?

Leader:

David chose kindness and trust in God instead of revenge.

What did David do when he had the chance to hurt King Saul?

Was it easy for David to choose kindness?

What does this story teach us about trusting God?

What does Jesus tell us to do when someone is unkind?

Is it easy to love people who hurt us?

How can we show kindness like Jesus?

Examples:

- Sharing even when someone doesn't share with you.
- Saying kind words when someone says something mean.
- Praying for people who hurt others.

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.

Alternative Reflection

Today, Jesus teaches us something very important: we should love everyone—even people who are unkind to us! But that's not always easy, is it?

Imagine this: Someone at school takes your favourite pencil without asking. How do you feel? **Angry? Upset?**

Maybe you want to take something of theirs in return.

But what does Jesus say?

“Love your enemies. Be kind to those who are unkind to you.”

That sounds hard! But let's think about what happened in today's first reading. David had a chance to hurt King Saul, who was trying to harm him. But instead of getting revenge, David chose kindness and trusted God.

Jesus wants us to do the same. Instead of fighting back or being mean when someone hurts us, He asks us to:

- Forgive instead of getting even.
- Pray for those who are unkind.
- Be kind even when others are not.

Why? God is always kind and forgiving and wants us to be like Jesus.

Let's think of one way we can show love this week. Maybe we can forgive a friend, share with a sibling, or say something kind to someone who needs it.

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:

Jesus teaches us to love everyone, even those who are unkind. Let us now pray to God, asking for God's help in loving and caring for others. After each prayer, we say, Lord, hear our prayer.

1. For the Church: That all people will show kindness, forgiveness, and love to others, even when it is difficult, we pray to the Lord. All: Lord, hear our prayer.
2. For our families and friends: That we will be patient, kind, and forgiving at home, just as Jesus teaches us, we pray to the Lord. All: Lord, hear our prayer.
3. For people who are unkind or hurt others: That they may have a change of heart and learn to be loving and caring like Jesus, we pray to the Lord. All: Lord, hear our prayer.
4. For our world: That all people may learn to live in peace, choosing love instead of hatred, we pray to the Lord. All: Lord, hear our prayer.
5. The leader may invite other intercessions from the children.

Leader:

Loving God, thank you for always showing us mercy and kindness. Help us to follow Jesus and share your love with others. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Return to the church.

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 for Masses with Children
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