



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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

Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time Children's Liturgy of the Word

The readings this week teach us that God gives us the freedom to choose good or evil and that Jesus calls us to follow God's law not just in our actions, but from our hearts—with love, honesty, and purity. This Sunday highlights human free will, the joy of keeping God's commandments, God's hidden wisdom revealed by the Spirit, and Jesus fulfilling and deepening the Old Law.

God sets before us fire (danger) and water (life). No one is forced to sin; God watches over those who fear Him and offers life or death based on our choices. God loves us so much that He lets us pick good or evil paths, like choosing vegetables or candy.

God's wisdom is secret and amazing, hidden from the world's rulers but revealed by the Holy Spirit to those who love Him. The Spirit shows us God's good plans, better than any game.

Jesus didn't cancel the old laws—He made them perfect. Don't just avoid murder; don't get angry. Jesus says obey God in your heart, not just outside—like being kind even when you're mad and always telling the truth.

Jesus teaches that God's law is a gift for happiness, but we must choose it freely every day. Our hearts matter most: control anger, purity in thoughts, and simple honesty. This fulfills the Old Law and leads to heaven. God gives us the power to choose good. Jesus helps your heart say 'yes' to Him."

The Liturgy Office removed verses 27 & 27 from the Gospel, as they are not helpful for children participating in the Children's Liturgy of the Word.

Background

Sirach 15:15-20 is one of the Wisdom Books of the Bible, written towards the end of the Old Testament. This collection of wisdom was compiled by Ben Sira, a sage and scribe of the Law, in Jerusalem. In today's passage, Ben Sira presents the contrasting choices that we face, which we can freely choose between. This passage is one of the key sections in the Bible that emphasizes our free will. We can willingly turn towards good or evil. While God calls for our love and response, He does not impose it upon us, as love must be a free act.

Psalms 119 The psalmist celebrates blameless fidelity. Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI emphasize this as the path to true happiness through wholehearted adherence.

1 Corinthians 2:6-10 Paul's letter addresses philosophers who pride themselves on their wisdom. He teaches a wisdom that transcends human understanding, revealing the mystery of God's plan throughout history, culminating in Christ's arrival as the key to understanding it all. While we may not fully grasp life's meaning with its unpredictable twists, we are assured by the Spirit of God that there is a purpose for our glory in all circumstances. This same Spirit, which understands everything, lives within us as Christians.

Matthew 5:17-37 Jesus fulfills the Law not by abolishing it, but by revealing its heart: a righteousness of love surpassing external legalism. He interiorizes commandments—against anger (like murder), lust (adultery in thought), and false oaths (honesty)—urging us to root out sin at its source. Jesus calls us to reconcile before worship, encouraging us to forgive and seek peace to connect with God. Choose purity in a lust-filled world to protect heart and home. Speak truth: let "yes" be yes, as honesty builds trust and strengthens relationships.

As previously noted, the Liturgy Office removed verses 27 & 27 from the Gospel, as they are not helpful for children participating in the Children's Liturgy of the Word. In addition, it is not included in the optional reflection.

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)

Dear children, Jesus tells us something very important. God doesn't just look at what we do—He looks at our hearts. Go with your leaders to listen to God's Word.

Once most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the celebration site. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the CLoW room, 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 offer the following prayer, in these or similar words.

Dear Jesus, help us to listen with open ears and loving hearts. Teach us to choose what is good and to love as You do. Amen. Let us begin.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Amen.

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

READINGS

FIRST READING

Sirach 15.15-20

A reading from the book of Sirach.

If you choose, you can keep the commandments,
and they will save you. If you trust in God, you too shall live,
and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice.

The Lord has placed before you fire and water;
stretch out your hand for whichever you choose.

Before each person are life and death, good and evil
and whichever we choose shall be given.

For great is the wisdom of the Lord;
he is mighty in power and sees everything;
his eyes are on those who fear him,
and he knows every human action.

He has not commanded anyone to be wicked,
and he has not given anyone permission to sin.

The word of the Lord.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 119.1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34

R. Blessed are those who walk in the law of the Lord!

Blessed are those whose way is blameless,
who walk in the law of the Lord.

Blessed are those who keep his decrees,
who seek him with their whole heart. **R.**

You have commanded your precepts
to be kept diligently.

O that my ways may be steadfast
in keeping your statutes! **R.**

Deal bountifully with your servant,
so that I may live and observe your word.

Open my eyes, so that I may behold
wondrous things out of your law. **R.**

Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes,
and I will observe it to the end.

Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart. **R.**

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 2.6-10

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters,
Among the mature, we do speak wisdom,
though it is not a wisdom of this age
or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish.
But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden,
which God decreed before the ages for our glory.
None of the rulers of this age understood this;
for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
As it is written,
"What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the human heart conceived
what God has prepared for those who love him."
These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit;
for the Spirit searches everything,
even the depths of God.
The word of the Lord.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

GOSPEL

Matthew 5.17, 20-24, 33-34, 37++

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Do not think that I have come

to abolish the Law or the Prophets;

I have come not to abolish but to fulfil.

For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

"You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times,

'You shall not murder';

and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.'

But I say to you

that the one who is angry with a brother or sister,

will be liable to judgment,

and whoever insults their brother or sister,

will be liable to the council;

and whoever says, 'You fool,'

will be liable to the hell of fire.

"So when you are offering your gift at the altar,

if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you,

leave your gift there before the altar and go;

first be reconciled to your brother or sister,

and then come and offer your gift.

"Again, you have heard

that it was said to those of ancient times,

'You shall not swear falsely,

but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.'

But I say to you: Do not swear at all.

Let your word be 'Yes,' if 'Yes' or 'No,' if 'No';

anything more than this comes from the evil one."

The Gospel of the Lord.

REIMAGINED READINGS FOR CHILDREN

The reimagined readings below are intended for use after the children have heard the original reading. The intent is to allow the children to listen to the original reading and help them better understand it (not replace it).

Read at a minimum, the Gospel, which has the highest priority, and then ask the children to sit down. You can then read the reimagined reading. Leaders may not have time to read all of the reading. If time permits, after the Gospel, proclaim the Psalm, and then the first reading, if time permits.

Reimagined readers must always remain faithful to the original Scripture's intent, making it age-appropriate for children to understand.

FIRST READING

Sirach 15.15-20

God says to us:

"I have given you a wonderful gift —
the freedom to choose.

You can choose what is good
or you can choose what is wrong.

You can choose kindness
or you can choose selfishness.

You can choose truth
or you can choose lies.

I do not force you.

You decide.

When you choose what is good,
you choose life and joy."

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 119.1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34

R. Blessed are those who follow God's way.

Blessed are those whose way is blameless,
who walk in the law of the Lord.

Blessed are those who keep his decrees,
who seek him with their whole heart. **R.**

Teach me, O Lord, the way of your rules,
and I will observe them to the end.

Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart. **R.**

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 2.6-10

St. Paul tells us:
God has amazing plans for us —
plans so wonderful
we can't even imagine them!
If we love God
and listen to Him,
He helps us understand
what really matters.
God's Spirit helps our hearts
know what is true and good.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

GOSPEL

Matthew 5.17, 20-24, 27-28, 33-34, 37++

Jesus said:

"You have learned the commandments:

Do not hurt others.

Do not lie.

Be faithful.

Keep your promises.

But I tell you something deeper.

It's not enough to avoid hitting someone —

don't hold anger in your heart.

It's not enough to avoid lying —

be truthful in everything you say.

It's not enough to keep promises —

be the kind of person people can trust.

Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes.'

Let your 'No' mean 'No.'

God doesn't only see what you do —

He sees what is inside your heart."

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? Allow children to respond.

In the first reading, God tells us something important:

“I have placed before you life and death. You are free to choose.” That means every day — even today — you get to choose.

You choose:

- How you speak
- How you act
- How you treat others

Is it sometimes hard to choose the right thing? Why? Allow children to respond.

What happens inside you when you stay angry? Allow children to respond.

In the Gospel, Jesus teaches something even deeper. He says it's not just about what we do on the outside. It's about what is happening inside our hearts.

Jesus says:

- Don't just avoid hurting someone — don't hold anger in your heart.
- Don't just follow rules — be loving.
- Let your "Yes" mean "Yes."

How does it feel when you forgive someone? Allow children to respond.

What is one good choice you can make today? Allow children to respond.

Every choice is like planting a seed in your heart. If you plant:

- Kindness
- Honesty
- Forgiveness

Your heart grows strong and joyful.

But if you plant:

- Anger
- Meanness
- Lies

Your heart feels heavy. Jesus wants our hearts to be light and loving.

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.

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, concluding it with the cue for the response: 'We pray.' All respond to each petition by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer." Sample intercessions are below.

The intercessions are said. The Leader introduces them, and an assistant announces them.

The leader says:

God has given us the freedom to choose what is good. Let us bring our needs before Him with open hearts. After each intercession, we all say, 'Lord, hear our prayer.'

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

Assistant:

For the Church, that we may follow Jesus not only in our actions but in our hearts. We pray to the Lord. R:

Assistant:

For our families, that we may choose kindness and forgiveness at home. We pray to the Lord. R:

Assistant:

For our school and friends, that we may speak truthfully and let our "Yes" mean "Yes". We pray to the Lord. R:

Assistant:

For ourselves, that each day we may choose what leads to life and love. We pray to the Lord. R:

Assistant:

In the quiet of our hearts, we offer our own prayers... [pause]. We pray: Come, Lord Jesus. R:

The Leader says:

Loving God, You have placed before us the gift of choice. Help us choose what is good and true. 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 reflect on what they have heard and what they are now doing. Be mindful of children who may have difficulty finding their families.



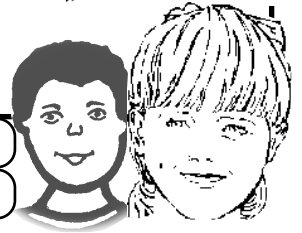
Eccles 15:15-20
Psalm 118
1 Corinthians 2:6-10
Matthew 5:17-37

Speak, Lord

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SUNDAY LITURGY FOR CHILDREN

Year A — 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time



HAPPY are those who FOLLOW GOD'S LAWS

In the spaces below draw pictures or write about how you will do what God wants:

At home with my family

With friends

HOW?

In what I say

At school

Readings: Lectionary Sundays and Solemnities,
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