

Children's liturgy for Fifth Sunday of Lent (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: purple or rose

Song suggestions: Make me a channel of your peace (898, Laudate)

Welcome: When people have done something wrong to us we often feel angry and want them to be punished, don't we? But in today's gospel Jesus teaches us that this isn't always the right way. After all, we're not perfect either are we?

Opening prayer: God of mercy, we ask you to help us to do what is right. Help us to see that we all get things wrong sometimes and to say sorry when we do. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm: Psalm 125 r 3

Gospel acclamation: *everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. For Lent we use an acclamation that doesn't use the word 'Alleluia'.*

Gospel: John 8:1-11

Then everyone went home, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early the next morning he went back to the Temple. All the people gathered round him, and he sat down and began to teach them. The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught doing something wrong, and they made her stand before them all. "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught doing something wrong. In our Law Moses commanded that such a woman must be stoned. Now, what do you say?" They said this to trap Jesus, so that they could accuse him. But he bent over and wrote on the ground with his finger.

As they stood there asking him questions, he straightened himself up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has committed no sin may throw the first stone at her." Then he bent over again and wrote on the ground. When they heard this, they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone, with the woman still standing there. He straightened himself up and said to her, "Where are they? Is there no one left to condemn you?"

"No one, sir," she answered.

"Well, then," Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go, but do not sin again."

(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below)*

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from that reading?

The scribes and Pharisees bring a woman to Jesus who has done something wrong. The law says that she should be punished, but the Pharisees ask Jesus what he would do. What does Jesus say?

Jesus says that the person who has done nothing wrong themselves, should be the person who throws the first stone at the woman.

Why do you think Jesus says this? What happens next?

Slowly, all the scribes and Pharisees leave, until just the woman and Jesus are left. What does Jesus say to the woman?

Jesus says that he will not punish her either, but that she should go away and try to do the right thing from now on. How do you think the woman felt when she heard this? Is it easy to change?

We have all done things wrong. Can you think of a time when you did something wrong? Don't say it out loud, but keep it in your head. How did it feel when you knew you had done something wrong? What happened next? Did you get told off? How did it feel when you had said sorry, and been forgiven? Will you try not to do whatever it was again?

Jesus knows that none of us are perfect. He forgives us for the things that we have done wrong and no matter what he always loves us. But he also asks us to change, to try our hardest not to do the wrong thing again.

Jesus asks us not to judge people who have done something wrong, because we all do wrong things sometimes. Instead we should try to forgive them, as God forgives us. But we should also try to help them see that they need to change, so that they no longer do what is wrong.

When Amie's daughter Lombeh became ill in Sierra Leone, things were very difficult for her. Lombeh was so small that people would ask if Amie was carrying a doll.

She says: "People were pointing fingers at me. Sometimes I had to pack Lombeh with clothes so she would look big when I took her out... It was shameful and I felt discouraged."

We all have times when we are treated unfairly and it hurts. We also all have times when we are not quite as nice to others as we should be.

But once Amie had met the Sisters at a local clinic, things began to change. As Lombeh began to grow, so people's attitudes began to change:

"Sometimes when we meet people, they ask me, 'Is this the same child?' and I say 'Yes'.", Amie explains

Let us try to forgive those who treat us unfairly and to follow Jesus' example of love for all people. But let's also try to make a change – to do what is right, and to help others to feel God's love in the way that we treat them.

Intercessions *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

Let us offer our prayers to God, who loves us.

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that she may follow Jesus' example and show understanding and forgiveness to all people. Lord, in your mercy...

For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

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We pray for all people throughout the world: that we may treat one another with love, respect and fairness so that everyone has an equal chance in life. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, our family and our friends: that we may always try our best to do what is right, so that the world becomes a fairer place for all to live. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of love, you forgive us when we go wrong, and encourage us to try again to be better. Guide us to do what is right and to make this world a fairer place for all who live in it. Amen.

You may wish to say slowly together the Our Father, pausing over the phrase: forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Activity suggestions

Share the activity sheet with the children and invite them to colour in the illustration. Encourage them to try the other activities on the sheet at home during the week.

Remind the children to tell their grown-ups all that they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today. Can they try throughout the week to make a change, do what is right and forgive others? Can they try to stand up against unfairness and make the world a fairer place for everyone?

For more activities and resources for children this Lent visit **cafod.org.uk/primary**

*Gospel passage taken from:

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