

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Solemnity of Christ the King, Year B
21 November 2021
John 18:33-37

Catechist Background

Before entering into Advent, the final Sunday of the liturgical year is always the celebration of Christ the King. In today's gospel reading, Jesus has been handed over to the Roman authorities by Jewish leaders, as the Jewish leaders did not have the power to carry out capital punishment. Pilate, as the representative of the Roman Empire, was reluctant to get involved in petty religious affairs, but Jesus stood before him accused by his detractors of treason, saying he claimed to be the King of the Jews. This was the equivalent of declaring the revolutionary overthrow of the Roman Emperor, punishable by death. Jesus demonstrates that the terms of his 'Kingdom' are not to be understood in the usual political sense. His Kingdom does not have boundaries, but is found of the hearts of all who sincerely try to live out the Truth of God's Love.

The liturgical colour today is white.

Setting the Scene

For the activity described below you will need one large map for the whole group to see and a flag for each child to decorate; these can be made by attaching a piece of paper to a straw or a pencil. You will also need colouring materials.

We Say Sorry

Leader: You are our King, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You are our Saviour, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You call us to you every day, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God, may all things in this world and in heaven praise you for your goodness and love.
Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: John 18:33-37

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- Why was it a crime to claim that Jesus—or anybody else—was the King of the Jews?
- Hold up a map of the world. Show where Jerusalem is and the tiny area that Jews lived in 2000 years ago. Point out where England is and where Queen Elizabeth is the queen. Point out other countries and their (earthly) rulers have control of. Where is Jesus' Kingdom?

Response

Some children may know that flags are the symbol of a country (or a brand of car, etc) and that the flags themselves may contain symbols. For instance, the Union Jack combines the St. George Cross (England) with the St. Andrew Cross (Scotland), the St David Cross (Wales) and the St. Patrick Cross (Ireland); the American flag has one star for each state and one stripe for each of the original states.

Give each child a flag to decorate for Christ's Kingdom. If time and space permits, have a little 'parade' around the children's liturgy space, joyfully waving the flags in proclamation of Christ's Kingdom.

We Believe

Relating to the creed what you have shared with the children, ask this series of questions and invite the children to reply, 'I do.'

- Do you believe in God the Father, creator of everything we can see and everything beyond what we can see?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the King of all there is?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, calling us to live God's Kingdom?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'You took the time even to answer Pilate, and so we now pray...'

Leader: We pray for the pope and the bishops, that they live their lives in the spirit of the Kingdom of God. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for all kings and queens and presidents and prime ministers in this world, that they may know that Jesus Christ is the true ruler of all things. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for people unjustly accused of crimes, that they find the strength and courage to sustain them. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for all those who have died in the last year, that they may enjoy eternity with God. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, we know that you love us. Help us in our lives to live the way you command. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

