



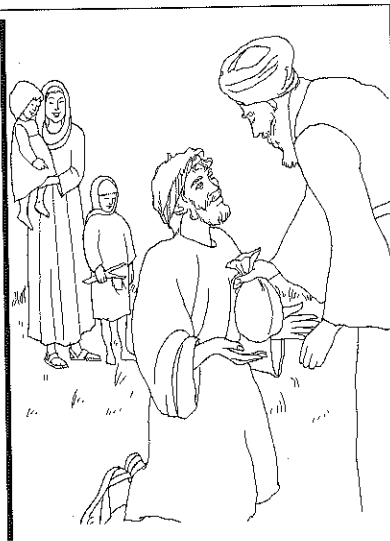
33RD SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME

RESPONSE: Psalm 63

I long for you;
I long for you;
I long for you,
my God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

"Come; be happy with me."
Alleluia!
"Be happy with me."



EVALUATION

We are providing this brief evaluation form for use after you have celebrated this Sunday's liturgy with the children.

Notes for future reference:

What went well?

What needs improvement?

LITURGICAL SEASON BACKGROUND

This is the next to last Sunday in Ordinary Time as we continue to reflect on the end of time. During the past weeks we have been reflecting on life in the kingdom of God and our share in building that kingdom here on earth.

Last Sunday the celebration of the Dedication of St. John Lateran replaced the 32nd Sunday. The gospel told the story of Zacchaeus meeting Jesus. Their encounter reveals how Jesus can change us and desires to live in our hearts. As we reflect during these remaining Sundays of the liturgical year, we are reminded that the kingdom of God is in our hearts; building the kingdom begins with changing our hearts.

This Sunday Jesus tells us a parable, this one about rendering to God an accounting for what we have done with the gifts we have been given. In the parable, an owner gives his servants different amounts of money to attend to while he was gone. When he returns, the servant to whom he gave the least, buried the little he had and produced nothing. Of course, the owner was disappointed and took the money from the servant and gave it to the servant who had made the best of his portion.

During this time in the liturgical year, we, too, evaluate our lives. How responsible have we been in using the resources God has given to us? We remember that it is not how much we have but how well we have used even the little we may have for the honor and glory of God.

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND

The connection between the readings today is thin but powerful. The portrait of the virtuous woman painted in the reading from *Proverbs* shows what it means to be the good and faithful servant Jesus talks about in the parable from *Matthew*. That the good woman does with her life spells it out for us all: she "works for the poor and helps those in need. She speaks with wisdom and is kind to everyone." Such a woman is like the faithful servant in the parable who doubled the amount given by the owner.

Some older translations of the Bible use an archaic English word for money: "talent." Here is a case in which the use of a word in the Bible has given it a new meaning. The word talent has come to mean a special gift someone has received — which makes the point of the parable. We are to use the gifts or talents God has given us to improve our world in ways that give glory to God.

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LITURGICAL ENVIRONMENT

The environment for Ordinary Time is simple, featuring a candle, a plant or group of plants, or some Fall colors, and perhaps some incense. The liturgical color of the season is green.

You might display the *SUNDAY Scripture Poster* which this week, is an illustration of the Gospel, showing the man giving his servants money. The poster could be sent home with a different family each week to color for the next celebration. The book of God's word, displayed facing the assembly, is the focal point of the gathering space.

CENTERING / PROCESSIONAL SONG

You might use the same centering/gathering song for several Sundays during this season. Suggestions:

- "Soon and Very Soon" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #2, Treehaus Communications). This is an appropriate song for the last Sundays in Ordinary Time. The gestures or movement call for simply clapping and swaying to the music, whether used in procession or as a centering song.
- "Song of the Body of Christ" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #30, Treehaus Communications). This would be an appropriate song for the closing Sundays of the liturgical year. When used as a centering song, rather than as a processional, you might use the movement and gestures suggested in *Sing God a Simple Song*.
- "To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #46, Treehaus Communications). You might follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

FIRST READING *Proverbs 31:10, 12, 20, 26, 28, 31*

The reader may be either a child or an adult; in either case, the person should know ahead of time in order to prepare carefully. The reader might imagine describing a beloved parent or special friend who fits the description of the good woman. The tone reveals delight in knowing such a person.

PSALM RESPONSE

The psalm is not only a response to the first reading; rather, "responsorial" is descriptive of the way the psalm is prayed, with the children responding to the cantor or leader. You might use the same psalm through several Sundays. *Suggestions:*

- "Psalm 63: I Long For You" (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of*

Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children and SUNDAY Weekly Leader's Guide, Year A, page 130, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word*, Cycle A, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).

- "Psalm 122: We Shall God Up With Joy" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #6, Treehaus Communications). Suggested gestures:

We shall go up with joy . . . (Lift hands upward.)
to the house of our God. (Hands might be brought together, folded, heads bowed.)

- "To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #46, Treehaus Communications). You might follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Suggestions:

- "Come, Be Happy With Me" (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children and SUNDAY Weekly Leader's Guide*, Year A, page 130, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word*, Cycle A, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).
- "Alleluia" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #42, Treehaus Communications). You might follow the gestures as recommended in *Sing God a Simple Song* which suggests simply swaying back and forth for each "alleluia."
- Alleluia verse from "Peace Is Flowing Like A River" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #51, Treehaus Communications). You might follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

GOSPEL *Matthew 25:14-30*

Usually the presider reads the Gospel. You might read this text as one would tell a story, letting the dialog carry the drama of the events, revealing pride in accomplishment. The tone at the end, however, should convey disappointment in the servant rather than anger.

HOMILY OUTLINE

See the *SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide*, Year A, pages 130 and 131, for "Focus of the Readings" and "Reflecting on the Readings With Children." When reflecting on the scriptures with children we take our cues from the children's responses. In so doing, you might use some of the questions below to enrich their appreciation of God's word.

WE LISTEN TO GOD SPEAK

- What might the children in the assembly hear God saying to them in today's readings?
- How might you engage the children in the biblical experience with open-ended questions?

Examples for this week's readings:

Concerning the first reading:

- Why do you suppose the writer of Proverbs says a woman who is good is more precious than jewels?
- Why do you think the writer singles out certain things as important, such as, working for the poor, helping those in need, being kind to everyone?
- Why do you think the writer singled out the way her husband and children admire her?

Concerning the Gospel:

- How would you have felt if you were one of the servants who had been productive? If you were the one who buried your money?
- If you were one of the productive servants how would have felt toward the unproductive servant?
- Why do you think the owner gave different amounts of money to the servants? Wouldn't it have been more equitable to give each the same?
- Why do you think the owner invited each of the productive servants to come and be happy?
- How do you feel about the owner? Toward what he did with each of the servants?
- If you were the owner, how would you feel about each of the servants?
- What does this story tell you about who God is?

WE REFLECT ON THE REIGN OF GOD

- How can you invite the children to look out of the biblical experience at their lives today?
- How can you use the biblical imagery of today's readings to explore with children their experience of God's presence in our lives today?

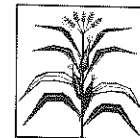
Examples for this week's readings

Concerning the first reading:

- Who do you know that comes to mind when you hear this reading that describes a good woman?
- How do good people help the poor today? Show kindness toward everyone?
- What is it like for you to be kind to everyone? To help the poor? To be praised for what you do?

Concerning the Gospel:

- Who are some of the good and faithful servants that you know or know about? What do they do?
- Who are some of the lazy people that you know or know about? How do they act?
- In what way is there some of the good servant and some of the lazy servant in you?
- What talents and gifts has God given to you? How have you used them?
- What is it like for you to use your talents? Not to use them?
- In what ways has God invited you to "come and be happy with me"?
- If God were to call you today to give an accounting for what you have done, what do you think you would be told?
- Describe a time when you used your talents to help someone? What was that like for you?
- Why do you think God wants us to use our talents?



WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

- How might you attune yourself to encourage the children's own creative responses to God's word?
- How might the Spirit be moving the children to respond to God's word in praise and thanksgiving?

Examples for this week's readings:

Concerning the first reading:

- In what ways can we work for the poor and help those in need?
- What can we do to be kind to one another?
- What can we do to reward people who are kind and good?

Concerning the Gospel:

- How can you use your talents or gifts this week to help someone at school? At home? In your neighborhood?
- How do you think God wants you to use your talents?
- What can you do to be a good and faithful servant of God?
- What are some ways in which we can come and be happy with God?

CREED

Invite the children to profess their faith by creedal statements that echo the readings. Reflect on what the readings say about God as Creator, Jesus as Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit as the Giver of Life. Express these statements so that the children can give their assent to them. This week's readings, for example, offer these options:

- God, who creates us each with special talents and gifts; who wants us to come and be happy.
- Jesus, who used the gifts of God and worked wonders; who teaches us the way to give glory to God in what we do.
- Holy Spirit, who fills us with the gifts of God and enables us to do what we otherwise could not do.

PRAYERS OF FAITHFUL

The proclamation of the word leads us to change our lives and express our gratitude in the celebration of the Eucharist. After the children have offered their prayers and concerns, you might also offer petitions based on the scripture texts. See notes for the 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time for guidelines on preparing petitions.

In formulating the prayers, you might draw from the verbs or "action words" and biblical images in this week's readings. For example: *does good, is kind, works for the poor, speaks with wisdom, called, put in charge, be happy.*

NOTE: Arrange to have the Sunday Scripture Leaflets given to the children as they are leaving Mass. Encourage the children and parents to use these leaflets through the week to continue reflecting prayerfully on God's Word. In addition, emphasize the use of the Light of the World, Our Family Spiritual Life Journal, pages 136 and 137, (Treehaus Communications, Inc.) as a way of assisting the family's deeper reflection on God's word at home.



CENTERING / PROCESSIONAL SONG

• "To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King" (Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song, #46, Treehaus Communications).
Substitutions/Additional Notes:

OPENING PRAYER

Presider: O God, you have created each of us with special gifts. Help us not to be afraid to use what you have given to us, especially when we think we might fail. Guide us in the way to use our talents so that we give honor and glory to you, as Jesus did. We pray in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

FIRST READING

Today's Reader: _____

Presider: Today we hear what a good person does.

PSALM RESPONSE

Presider or Leader of Song: **Our God shows us goodness and kindness, so we sing in praise:**

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

• "Come, Be Happy With Me" (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children* and *SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide*, Year A, page 130, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word*, Cycle A, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

GOSPEL *Matthew 25:14-30*

Today's Reader: _____

Preliminary Comments: **Jesus tells us a story that will help us know how to be good and faithful servants . . . and not be afraid to try.**

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HOMILY

Focal Points: God wants us to be happy. God tells us the way to be happy by being kind and good, helping those in need, serving the poor and those who depend upon us. God creates each of us with special talents and depends upon us to use them in ways that make life better for everyone. The amount of talent does not matter. When we do the best with what we have, we can work wonders. We need not fear failure. In God's eyes and with God's gifts, we cannot fail . . . if we try.

Outline:

CREED

Presider: Let us proclaim our faith in the generous God who shares with us many wonderful gifts.

• Do you believe in God, who created each of us with special gifts?

All: Yes, we believe! Or: Yes, we believe in God, who . . .

• Do you believe in Jesus, who worked wonders with his talents and teaches us to use our talents, too.

All: Yes, we believe! Or: Yes, we believe in Jesus, who . . .

• Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, whose gifts are boundless and fill us with God's own power.

All: Yes, we believe! Or: Yes, we believe in the Holy Spirit, who . . .

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Presider: Our God gives us many wonderful gifts. So do we trust in God when we pray. (After the children have offered their prayers, you might also add prayers based on today's scripture texts. For example:)

+ May all nations and leaders of nations use their gifts and resources to make life better for all people; we pray.

All: Generous God, hear our prayer.

+ May your church be blessed by your children because she is good and kind, speaks with wisdom, and works for the poor; we pray.

All: Generous God, hear our prayer.

+ May we in our families and neighborhoods use our talents to make life better for one another in your honor and glory; we pray.

All: Generous God, hear our prayer.

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

CLOSING PRAYER

Presider: O God, you create each of us with gifts to share and to show each other love and kindness in countless ways. We thank you and praise you as you invite us to come to your Table and to be happy with you. We pray with hearts filled with joy in the name of Jesus, your Son and our brother.

All: Amen.

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

NOTE: Arrange to have the *Sunday Scripture Leaflets* given to the children as they are leaving Mass. Encourage the children and parents to use these leaflets and the *Light of the World, Our Family Spiritual Life Journal* throughout the week.

THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

YEAR A

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Most generous God,
we cannot count
the wonderful gifts you have
poured into our lives.
Above all, you have given us
your Son, Jesus,
who has shown us the way
to our home with you.
Make us wise
in using these gifts
so that they will be
for the benefit of everyone.
Open our hearts to the world
so that we may spread
the Good News about Jesus,
who lives with you,
forever and ever.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

Since it is difficult to harmonize our two readings, we will begin with the Gospel.

We are nearing the end of the liturgical year, and the Gospel, like last week's, directs our thoughts to the end of time. Last week the focus was vigilance. This week and next it is "rendering our account." God has given each of us talents, grace, a vocation in life. It is clear from the Gospel that we are meant to use those talents for the good of the reign of God. The importance of the parable is that our reward, "Come be happy with me," is not dependent on the size of our talents, but on our use of what we have been given.

The woman in the first reading is praised because she lived her vocation as wife and mother in a most charitable and noble way. Each of us is called to do that.

FIRST READING:

Proverbs 31:10, 12, 20, 26, 28, 31.

This is a reading from the book of Proverbs.

A woman who is good
is more precious than jewels.
She does not hurt others;
she does good all the days of her life.

She works for the poor
and helps those in need.
She speaks with wisdom
and is kind to everyone.


Her husband and children call her blessed
and tell her how wonderful she is.

May she be rewarded for all that she does,
and may everyone who knows her
sing her praises.

The Word of the Lord.

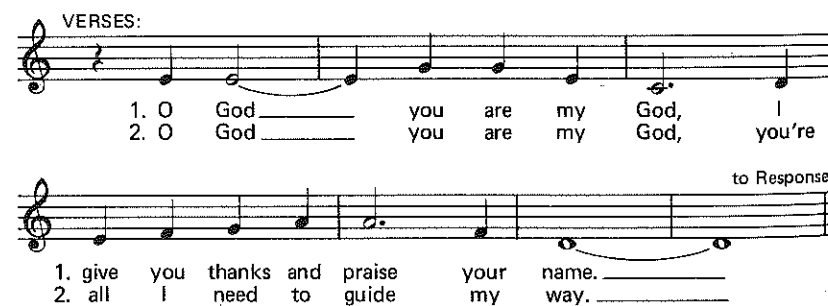
RESPONSE: *Psalm 63*

RESPONSE:



I long for you, I long for
you, I long for you my God.

VERSES:



1. O God you are my God, I you're
2. O God you are my God, you're

to Response

1. give you thanks and praise your name.
2. all I need to guide my way.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



(finger snap) Come, be hap - py with me."

Al - le - lu - ia! Be hap - py with me."

GOSPEL: *Matthew 25:14-30*

This is a reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

Jesus told this parable to his disciples:

“Once there was a man going on a long journey.

He called the servants together
and put each one in charge of some money.

One of the servants received \$100,
another received \$200 and another \$500.

The one who received \$500 went out quickly
and put the money to good use
and earned another \$500 for the owner.

[“The one who received \$200 earned \$200 more.

But the man who had \$100, buried it in the ground.]

“When the owner came home from the journey,
the first servant came and said,

‘Here is your money.

You gave me \$500 to take care of,
but I have earned \$500 more for you.’

“The owner said,

‘You are a good and faithful servant.
Because you have done so well,
I will put you in charge of even more.
Come, be happy with me.’

[“Then the second servant came and said,

‘Here is your money.
You gave me \$200 to take care of,
but I have earned \$200 more for you.’

“The owner said,

‘You are a good and faithful servant.
Because you have done so well,
I will put you in charge of even more.
Come, be happy with me.’

“Finally the man who had been given the \$100
came and said,

‘I know that you are a very strict man
and that you always want more money than you give.
I was afraid of losing your money,
so I buried it in the ground until you came back.
So here is the \$100 you gave me.’

“But the owner said,

‘You are a lazy man! You knew that I wanted you
to earn more money for me, and, yet,
you only buried it in the ground. You are not
a good servant, and you cannot work for me anymore!’

“Then the owner said to another servant,

‘Take the \$100 from this man,
and give it to the man who already has earned \$500.
Then take this lazy man out to be punished!’ ”]

The Gospel of the Lord.

[] Reader may omit text that appears in brackets.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS
WITH CHILDREN:

What did you hear?

Center the discussion on the talents and gifts of the children and people they know. Broaden their understanding of “talents.” In the Gospel it meant money. The message of the parable, however, is broader than that. What has God given us? What has God asked us to do? Some people are called to teach, others to cook, others to counsel people, others to preach. People are called to be mothers, sisters, fathers, priests, brothers, single people.

Children too have their gifts and talents. They are filled with God’s grace. Center the discussion on the talents and gifts they have and what they can do at their age to use what God has given them.

Help them remember the words that we will hear when we use God’s grace wisely.

“Come, be happy with me.”

Next week’s reading will make this even more understandable.