



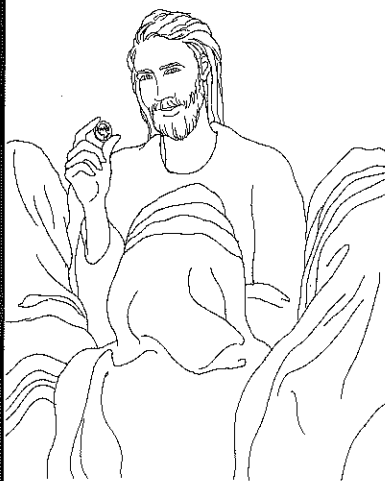
29TH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME

RESPONSE: *Psalm 96*

All the nations
will praise you
and know
that you are God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

"Give to God
what belongs to God."
Alleluia,
"what belongs to God."



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

During these closing weeks in Ordinary Time, we continue our reflections on the reign of God and our part in the building of that kingdom here on earth. Two weeks ago, on the 27th Sunday, we heard the parable about a vineyard owner who sent his servants and then his own son to collect his share of the harvest from the workers whom he had hired. But the workers kept the harvest for themselves, even killed some servants and the owner's son.

Last Sunday we heard another parable, about the king who held a wedding feast for his son and when the invited guests failed to come, he sent his servants to invite whomever they met, both good and bad people.

This Sunday we hear the teaching of Jesus about giving to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. Just as Jesus detected being tricked by those who questioned him, the way Jesus responded invites us to be on guard to detect the hand of God or of evil in the world we face as we do the work of Jesus. We can use what is sacred in profane ways and we can use what is profane to accomplish what is sacred.

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND

The scripture readings for this Sunday deal with the notion of the one true God who is above all other gods. Some leaders of nations promoted themselves and were embraced by their people as the embodiment of gods. In the first reading, Cyrus, King of Persia, did not know that the source of his power and all authority on earth came from the one true God. He attributed his victories to the gods of his nation. Isaiah sees the hidden presence of God's own hand and proclaims these victories to be the work of the one true God.

In the Gospel, Jesus deals with a trick question that some of the Jewish leaders asked about payment of taxes — to an emperor who proclaimed himself to be a god. Jesus replied with a profound insight into the work of God in a world where evil also is at work. While Jesus makes a distinction between Caesar and God, his reply does not set the profane as a world apart from the sacred. Rather, he calls his questioners to acknowledge that only God is to be worshiped and to be aware of how God is able to use the Caesars of the world to fulfill God's plan of salvation. Moreover, Jesus' reply invites us to be aware of how easily we can be seduced by evil in the world — and think we are doing the work of God.

When reflecting on these texts with our children, you might need to help them understand that the Roman people believed Caesar was a god. If Jesus had said simply that they should pay taxes to Caesar, he would have left himself open to the Jewish leaders to accuse him of

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saying they should worship Caesar. If Jesus had answered that they did not have to pay taxes to Caesar, then they could have had him punished. Children are able to appreciate such challenges and will have their own insights to share.

LITURGICAL ENVIRONMENT

The environment for Ordinary Time is simple, featuring a candle, a plant or group of plants, 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 Jesus telling the people to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God. 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:*

- "Psalm 103: The Lord Is Kind and Merciful" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #39, Treehaus Communications). Children can sing the refrain with the following gestures:

The Lord is kind . . . (Cross hands over heart.)
. . . and merciful. (Extend hands outward in a gesture of giving. Repeat gestures when line is repeated.)
Slow to anger, (Cross right hand over heart.)
rich in kindness, (Cross left hand over heart.)
the Lord is kind and merciful. (Extend hands outward again in a gesture of giving.)

- "Psalm 100: We Are God's People" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #38, Treehaus Communications). 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*.

- "Sing to the Mountain" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #29, Treehaus Communications). You may wish to follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

FIRST READING *Isaiah 45:1,4-6*

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. This text might be read to

convey warmth and the strength of God's personal reassurance.

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 96: All the Nations Will Praise You" (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children* and *SUNDAY Weekly Leader's Guide*, Year A, page 122, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word*, Cycle A, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).

- "Psalm 100: We Are God's People" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #38, Treehaus Communications).

- "Psalm 19: Lord, You Have the Words" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #39, Treehaus Communications).

- "Psalm 122: I Rejoiced" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #6, Treehaus Communications).

You might follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Suggestions:

- "Give To God What Belongs To God" (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children* and *SUNDAY Weekly Leader's Guide*, Year A, page 123, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word*, Cycle A, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).

- "Psalm 100: We Are God's People" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #38, Treehaus Communications).

- "Salesbury Alleluia" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #41, Treehaus Communications).

You might follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

GOSPEL *Matthew 22:15-21*

Usually the presider reads the Gospel. This text can be read as one would tell a story, letting the dialog convey the drama of the event. Dramatic emphasis, however, should call attention to the story and not to the storyteller.

HOMILY OUTLINE

See the SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide, Year A, pages 122 and 123, 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 think God loved the people of Israel so much?
- Cyrus was not familiar with the God of Isaiah. Cyrus believed in the gods of his nation. What do you think it was like for Cyrus to hear what the one true God had to say to him: that God had called him by name and given him his title of honor?
- What do you think it was like for Cyrus to be hearing a God whom he did not know tell him that the strength he has comes from God?

- How would you have responded if you were Cyrus?

Concerning the Gospel:

- How do you think Jesus felt about the Jewish leaders who questioned him?
- How do you think Jesus felt about Caesar?
- Why do you think the Jewish leaders wanted to trick Jesus?
- How do you think Jesus knew that the Jewish leaders were trying to trick him?
- What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God"? Don't all things really belong to God?

□ 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:

- God called Cyrus, gave him a title, gave him strength. In what way have you felt God call you? What has God given you the strength to do?
- Just as God knew Cyrus by name, which is to say personally, so does God know each of us personally. What is it like for you to be known as God knows you?
- When might God have given you strength, even though, at the time, you might not have known it?
- What is it like for you to believe that there is only one true God, rather than many gods? What other gods do some people believe in today?

Concerning the Gospel:

- How do people today give to God what belongs to God?
- The Jewish leaders told Jesus that they knew him to be honest and fair in the way he treats people. How have you felt about the teachings of Jesus?
- How do people today use their money and resources to serve the one true God? In what way do you use your money and resources to serve God?
- Some people make movie stars and sports figures into gods, as people made Caesar into a god. Other people make money or power and prestige their gods. In what way do people serve these gods instead of the one true God?
- Why is it important for you to serve the one true God?
- What do you think Jesus would say today about giving money to our government? How can we serve God as well as our government?

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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:

- How can you show your gratitude to God for caring personally for you and for giving you strength?
- What can you do to help people know that there is only one true God?

Concerning the Gospel:

- How can we always put God first in our lives?
- What do you need to do in order to give to God what belongs to 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 is the only true God, the God of all people.
- Jesus, who always gave to God all that belonged to God; teaches us to give to God what belongs to God.
- Holy Spirit, who fills us with God's own strength; who helps us to believe in the one true God.

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: *love, chosen people, called, know, "I give you strength," "teach the truth," "give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar."*

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 124 and 125, (Treehaus Communications, Inc.) as a way of assisting the family's deeper reflection on God's word at home.



Liturgy of the Word

October 16, 2011

CENTERING / PROCESSIONAL SONG

• "Sing to the Mountain" (Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song, #29, Treehaus Communications)

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

OPENING PRAYER

Presider: God of creation, there is no other God but you. You want us to enjoy the world you have made and to worship only you. So do we gather today to praise you in the name of your Son, Jesus, who lives and reigns with you now and forever.

All: Amen.

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

FIRST READING *Isaiah 45:1, 4-6*

Today's Reader: _____
Presider: Today Isaiah tells us something that we should know but sometimes forget.

PSALM RESPONSE

Presider or Leader of Song: **Our God is the one true God; so with joy we sing in praise.**

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

• "Give To God What Belongs To God" (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children* and *SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide*, Year A, page 123, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word*, Cycle A, Treehaus Communications/ O.C.P. Publications).

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

GOSPEL *Matthew 22:15-21*

Today's Reader: _____
Preliminary Comments: Today we hear a story about the way Jesus answered a trick question.

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HOMILY

Focal Points: There is only one God who knows each of us personally and cares for us. We may not know God; we may even follow false gods. Nevertheless, we belong to the one true God, the God who guides all people to life that no other gods can give, life everlasting. Jesus helps us to know the one true God and to serve no other gods.

Outline:

CREED

Presider: Let us proclaim our faith in the one true God.

• Do you believe in God, who knows us personally and guides us?

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

• Do you believe in Jesus, who was sent by God to help us know and to serve the one true God?

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

• Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who fills us with the life of the one true God?

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

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Presider: Our God is the one true God who answers our prayers. 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 the nations of the world know and believe in you as the one true God; we pray.

All: Hear us, O God.

+ May our churches all give glory to your name; we pray.

All: Hear us, O God.

+ May we see your hand at work in our homes and neighborhoods, and know that you are the God who guides us; we pray.

All: Hear us, O God.

Substitutions/Additional Notes:

CLOSING PRAYER

Presider: God of all creation, you alone are the true God who personally cares for us. As we gather in your presence at your Table, may we know and feel your glory through Jesus Christ, your Son, now and forever.

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.

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**TWENTY-NINTH
SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
YEAR A**

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Lord, by your free gift
you have chosen us
to believe in you.
Increase our believing
and show us how to make
your name great in the world.
Everywhere, people search
for truth and for love;
may they find them in us,
in all that we do
and in all that we say.
We believe
that you listen to our prayer
through Jesus, your Son,
who lives with you,
forever and ever.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

Both of our readings focus on the uniqueness of God: there is only one God!

The reading from *Isaiah*, apart from stating this reality again and again, makes its point through the pagan Cyrus. Though he is pagan, he too was named by God. There are no pagan Gods; there is only one God who acts in and through all!

The Gospel makes the distinction between Caesar, thought to be a god, and God, the only true God. The question behind "should we pay taxes to Caesar?" is really, "should we honor him?" Jesus chooses to distinguish between the state and God. The state has its rightful place (of which taxes are a part) but there is only one God—and it's not Caesar!

FIRST READING: *Isaiah 45:1, 4-6*

This is a reading from the prophet Isaiah.

This is what God says to Cyrus, King of Persia,

"Because I love my chosen people of Israel,
I have called you by your name.
I give you a title of honor,
even though you do not know me.
I am God,
and there is no other God besides me.
I am the only God.
Even though you do not know me,
I give you strength.
I do this so that people everywhere
will know that there is no other God but me."

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: *Psalm 96*

RESPONSE:

Round ① ② Fine

All the na-tions will praise you, and know that you are God.

VERSES:

to Response

1. Give God glo - ry. Give hon - or and praise.
2. Pro-claim sal - va - tion day af - ter day.
3. Tell the na - tions God's won - der - ful deeds.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



GOSPEL: *Matthew 22:15-21*

This is a reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

Some Jewish leaders, called Pharisees, wanted to trick Jesus into saying something wrong. So they went to him and said,

"Teacher, we know that you are honest and that you always teach the truth about God. We know that you are not afraid of what other people will say about you. You treat everyone the same. So tell us what you think about this: should we pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

Jesus knew they were trying to trick him, so he said,

"You phonies!
Why are you trying to trick me?
Show me the money you use
to pay your taxes."

Jesus looked at it and said,

"Whose picture is on this money,
and whose name?"

They answered,

"Caesar's."

So Jesus said,

"Well then, give to Caesar
what belongs to Caesar.
And give to God what belongs to God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

You may need to explain a little of the background to today's Gospel reading. This should be kept simple not only because of their age, but also because our interest here is not in the historical political situation of the time. It will be helpful if the children know that the Jewish people lived in the Roman Empire. The leader of the empire was Caesar. The Romans believed that Caesar was a god. They worshipped him. His picture was on their money. Explain to them that this is true in many countries today as well. You might show them our coins and, if possible, some from other countries. Explain to them that when the Pharisees asked Jesus, "Should we pay taxes to Caesar?" they were trying to trick Jesus. If Jesus said, "Yes," they could say he worshipped Caesar. If he said, "No," they would tell Caesar Jesus told them not to pay taxes and Jesus would be put in jail.

- How did Jesus answer their question?
- What do you think he meant?

Help the children see that governments are necessary and they help us. You might explain that when their parents pay taxes, that money is used for schools, roads, helping the poor, people who have no jobs, elderly people who can't work anymore, parks, and so forth.

As Christians, we should help with those things. But the Pharisees wanted to know if Jesus would say Caesar was a god. Jesus' answer said that the government is good—but we worship only God.

- What do we give the government?
- How much must we obey the government (the laws?)
- What do we give to God?
- How must we obey God?

Note: the notion that we sometimes must choose between obedience to state or God is unreal for children. Discerning the application of civil disobedience is necessary for adults but not for children of this age.