

Week 6: 'Uniqueness of Jesus'

(5th Sunday in Lent, Year A – Sunday, 13th March 2005)

FOCUS FOR THE LEADER:

We believe that Jesus was the turning point in human history. He is the father's Son who came to heal us, to save us, to liberate us and to reveal to us the richness of God's love. Because of Jesus, we have been freed from our own sins, helped to overcome our sinfulness and given the promise of life, here and forever.

FOR OLDER CHILDREN

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Gospel Acclamation 2 for Lent Martin Foster



Praise to... you, Lord Je-sus Christ, Son of the Fa-ther, Word of God.

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At Your Word, Lord programme

GOSPEL: John 11:1-45

In this week's Gospel, we hear Jesus telling us that he is the resurrection and the life.

Breaking open the Gospel:

- Ask the children to think about how, in nature, things appear to die – but, then, they come back to life again. Say how daffodils die away but the bulb remains. If you plant the bulb, it will come to life again next Spring. Some of our trees appear to die in the Autumn; but they, too, come back to life in the Springtime. Fruit trees give us their fruit year after year. We can rely on that happening. It is the same for other things. Talk to them about tadpoles who die to their old life and come to a new life as a frog and caterpillars who come to new life as butterflies.
- In today's Gospel, Martha and Mary send an urgent message to Jesus saying that their brother Lazarus was very ill and they were afraid he would die. They wanted Jesus to come and cure him. At that time, if you wanted to send someone a message, you had to send a person to deliver it. There were no cars or trains; there was no e-mail, no mobile phones – not even ordinary telephones or post! So sending a message took time. By the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus had been dead for four days. In those days, when a person died, his body was wrapped with cloths. Jesus was very sad that Lazarus had died and he cried. Martha and Mary believed that Jesus was the Messiah, though, and

they believed that he could bring their brother back from the dead.



- You might consider telling them the story using hand puppets or finger puppets. You will need at least four characters: Jesus, Mary, Martha and Lazarus. You might begin the puppet show by getting Martha and Mary to be complaining about how long it was taking Jesus to come to them after they sent someone to tell him that Lazarus was very sick. They might be saying, "Why doesn't Jesus come? What is taking him so long?" Then Mary goes back to the house and Martha waits. Jesus finally arrives but Lazarus has died. Martha says "Lord, if you had been here before, my brother would not have died." Jesus says to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha says, "Yes, I know he will rise again at the end of time in the resurrection of all people." Jesus says to Martha, "I am the resurrection. I am life. Anyone who believes in me will live forever. Even though they die, they will live forever. Do you believe this?" Martha answers, "Yes, Lord, I believe you are the Christ." Then Martha goes and gets Mary. She cries and says, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus sees her crying, he was filled with pity and he began to cry. Everyone says, "See how much he loved Lazarus." Then Jesus asks, "Where is Lazarus buried?" and they reply, "Come and see." Lazarus should be in a box or something that might resemble a cave with a stone in front of it. Jesus says, "Roll the stone away from the cave." Move the stone and get Jesus to look up to heaven and say, "Father I thank you for hearing my prayers. I know you always hear me, but I am praying especially now so that these people will believe that you sent me." Then he shouts, "Lazarus, come out of the tomb!" Lazarus comes out all wrapped up with pieces of white

cloth and Jesus says, “Untie him, and let him go.”
Finish by saying that many people believed in Jesus because of what he did.

- Jesus can do all things. He will raise us up after we die. He asks us if we believe that. You might give the children a cross with a heart on it and ask them to write the words, “I believe in you, Jesus.” in the heart.

A Creed – a series of questions to which the children are invited to reply, “We do.”

- Do you believe that God wants the whole human family to be friends with each other?
- Do you believe that Jesus came to tell us how to love one another?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to understand what God is like?
- Do you believe in the Holy, Catholic Church, where we come to learn about God?
- Do you believe that God is asking us to share our faith with those around us?

Intercessions

Jesus has told us to ask God for what we need, so as God’s children, remember

- the Church throughout the world – that we all learn to share our faith with one another, we pray. *Response: Lord, hear our prayer.*
- God’s beautiful world, that we look after it with loving care, we pray. *Response: Lord, hear our prayer.*
- all those who are hungry or sad, lonely or sick, we pray. *Response: Lord, hear our prayer.*
- all who live in our parish who need our prayers, we pray. *Response: Lord, hear our prayer.*

Loving Father, we ask you to listen to these prayers in the name of Jesus, our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN:

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Praise. to... you, Lord Je - sus Christ, Son of the Fa - ther, Word of God.

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remains. If you plant the bulb, it will come to life again next Spring. Some of our trees appear to die in the Autumn; but they, too, come back to life in the Springtime. Fruit trees give us their fruit year after year. We can rely on that happening.

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- You might consider telling them the story using hand puppets or finger puppets. You will need at least four characters: Jesus, Mary, Martha and Lazarus. You might begin the puppet show by getting Martha and Mary to be complaining about how long it was taking Jesus to come to them after they sent someone to tell him that Lazarus was very sick. They might be saying, “Why doesn’t Jesus come? What is taking him so long?” Then Mary goes back to the house and Martha waits. Jesus finally arrives but Lazarus has died. Martha says “Lord, if you had been here before, my brother would not have died.” Jesus says to her, “Your brother will rise again. Anyone who believes in me will live.” Martha says, “Lord, I believe.” Then Martha goes and gets Mary. She cries and says, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus sees her crying, he was very sad and he began to cry. Then Jesus asks, “Where is Lazarus buried?” and they reply, “Come and see.” Lazarus should be in a box or something that might resemble a cave with a stone in front of it. Jesus says, “Roll the stone away from the cave.” Move the stone and get Jesus to look up to heaven and say, “Father I know you always listen to me.” Then he shouts, “Lazarus, come out of the tomb!” Lazarus comes out all wrapped up with pieces of white cloth and Jesus says, “Untie him, and let him go.” Finish by saying that many people believed in Jesus because of what he did.
- Jesus can do all things. He will raise us up after we die. He asks us if we believe that. You might give the children a cross with a heart on it and ask them to write the words, “I believe in you, Jesus.” in the heart.

A Creed – a series of questions to which the children are invited to reply, “We do.”

- Do you believe that God loves you very much?
- Do you believe that Jesus came to tell us what God is like?
- Do you believe that we come to church to learn about God?

Intercessions

Jesus has told us to ask God for what we need, so as God’s children, we pray

- for all God’s family so that we may share the Good News with everyone. *Lord, in your mercy; hear our prayer.*
- for God’s beautiful world that we look after it with loving care. *Lord, in your mercy; hear our prayer.*
- for all who are hungry or sad, lonely or sick, today we pray for *Lord, in your mercy; hear our prayer.*

Loving Father, we ask you to listen to these prayers in the name of Jesus, our Lord. *Amen*

