

A NOTE TO PARENTS

The second half of the summer in Lectionary Year B ("the year of Mark") raises some problems for teachers and preachers. The Gospels in late July and August cover several themes that have already been brought up this year. Or, as with today's Gospel (Herod's beheading of John the Baptist) they are complex and troubling. In August, we will spend four weeks reading virtually the whole of a long, theological passage from John, in which Jesus describes himself as the Bread of Life. The feeling of being stuck, week after week, with the same theme makes it difficult for the commentator to find fresh ways of revealing the Gospel's meaning, important as the passages may be.

During these same summer weeks, however, the lectionary's Epistle reading takes us through Ephesians. The Epistles are a part of the Bible which we hardly ever think to share with our children, and yet there is much in them that is very appealing. Paul's theological arguments will be beyond them, of course; but Ephesians (which may be by Paul but is more likely a kind of compendium of his thought assembled by a follower) contains little that is abstract or difficult, and much that is vivid and joyous.

You may want to explain to your child that for a while we will be thinking about what Jesus's life means for us instead of telling stories about it. Try reading the story of Paul's conversion to faith in Jesus (Acts 9:1-22) and then think together of what it must have been like for him to spread the Gospel across the Empire. He traveled; everywhere he went, he gathered groups of committed people and helped them get organized; he taught them, prayed with them ... then he moved on, keeping in touch by writing letters (and by conscientious prayer). Most of all, he was always looking for new and exciting ways of expressing the Good News, so that he could share it with others. We too need to do these things, to go on with the never-ending work of building up the Body of Christ.

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Year B
PROPER 10
TRACKS 1 and 2

*"Jesus has given us new life, and forgiven us,
through the richness
of his love."*

EPHESIANS 1:7



JESUS'S FOLLOWERS SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S LOVE.

Paul was a follower of Jesus. He started churches in many different places.

He told people the Good News: "God has given us new life because Jesus died and rose again."



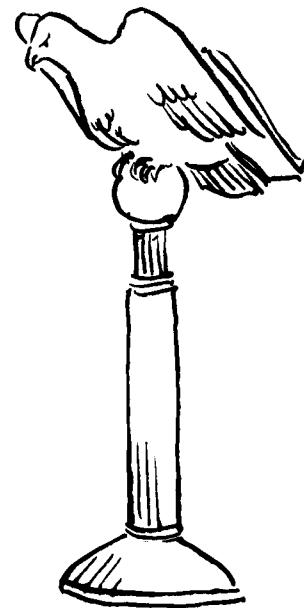
Paul and the other church leaders wrote letters to the new churches.

The people in the churches read the letters out loud, and saved them.



When Paul and the other leaders wrote a letter, they explained the Good News of Jesus. They tried to help the people in the new churches know God better, keep their promises, and live bravely in God's love.

The churches saved the letters. Some of the letters became part of the Bible. Today we still read them in church.



Draw someone reading in church. Draw people listening!