

The Gospel at Home

This Week's Gospel: Luke 21:5-19

Jews connected the very spirit of their faith to the Temple with its incense-filled, prayerful inner courts and its shaded outer courts where people met and talked. They celebrated their holy days at the Temple; it was the center of their faith community. But Jesus' assessment of the times in this Sunday's Gospel proved accurate. The Jews' rebellion against Roman occupation that began in A.D. 66 ended in the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 by the Roman forces. When Jesus predicts the destruction of the Temple to his disciples in Sunday's Gospel, they are shocked. Jesus both scares and assures his listeners, past and present. He explains that wars, disasters, and persecutions will continue in the world. He assures us that we can endure these and other troubles that occur in our lives. He promises to put words in our mouths so no one can put us down. He promises to be with us always.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): The language of this Sunday's Gospel is frightening for small children, so talk about how much God loves all creation. As the family looks forward to Thanksgiving, talk with your young child about all the good gifts God gives, especially the sun, the soil, and the seeds that grow the food we eat. This is a good time to establish the habit of a prayer before meals.

Promise (Grades K-1): This Sunday's Gospel is a difficult one for children, and so in class, children shared stories of their fears and worries. You may want to ask your child what he or she worries about. Stress that Jesus tells us not to be afraid because he is with us. Have your child tell you the story, "Lost in the Mall." Make a plan with your child so you both know what to do if he or she becomes lost like Jessica. The class learned and practiced the Our Father in class. Consider adding this prayer taught by Jesus into family prayers this week.

Good News (Grades 2-3): Although this Sunday's Gospel speaks of the end of the world, the class learned about the wonderful world God creates with love. Ask your child to show you the Creation Spiral he or she completed in class. Discuss some of the ways that your child learned to care for creation, and brainstorm others that your family can do. Jesus asks us not to worry when there are bad things happening in the world. Talk with your child about concerns he or she has for the world. Discuss how you deal with problems and how your faith plays a role.

Venture (Grades 4-6): In class, your child learned from the experiences of people who stood up for what they believed. Ask your child to share these experiences, especially Saint Elizabeth of Hungary. Ask what the Second Coming of Jesus means and share his promise to be with us in the last days. Spend some time talking about how your family can stand up for what you believe. Ask your young person how the Sacrament of Confirmation gives us what we need to respond to God's call in our lives.

Visions (Grades 7-9): Your child's class began with a discussion of hopes for the world. Talk about what hopes your family has for the world. What hopes do you have for your family? Read the Sunday Gospel together and discuss what world events may make your family anxious or afraid. Then talk about Jesus' promise. How do Jesus' words concern or comfort you? The class also talked about resolving conflict. Discuss how you and other family members can work on solving arguments that come up.

Pray Together

Make a litany prayer of all the things your family is grateful for—life, health, friends, a good home, etc. After each is mentioned, the whole family can say together: "Thanks be to God!"