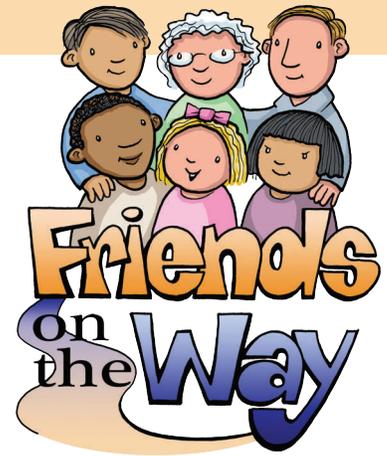


Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year A



Children's RCIA Resource

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Dismissal Session

The Dismissal Session is for catechumens only who are dismissed from worship before the Creed (RCIA #75.3). The Dismissal Session group may gather for the Catechetical Session at another time during the week.

Catechetical Session

When the Dismissal Session is immediately followed by the Catechetical Session, parents or other sponsors join the group after Eucharist. Baptized children preparing for confirmation and Eucharist may also join in the Catechetical Session (RCIA #254; Appendix III, #19).

Select the session options that fit your time frame.

NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY

Sunday's readings

- Isaiah 49:14-15
- Psalm 62:2-3, 6-9
- 1 Corinthians 4:1-5
- Matthew 6:24-34

Doctrine correlations

- God takes care of our needs (CCC #270).
- Create social conditions that promote God's reign of justice (CCC #1942).

RCIA team notes

Team members and each catechumen's family are discerning readiness of each catechumen for the Rite of Election. Assist with the selection of godparents for those ready (RCIA #11).

The Eighth Sunday of Ordinary Time occurs only when Easter falls late in April, so we rarely hear this week's Scripture passages. Be aware that many parents and sponsors may not be familiar with them.

CATECHIST'S NOTES

GETTING READY FOR THE SESSION

Items to prepare

- check-in sheet and nametag materials
- Bibles, one set to Matthew 6:24
- poster paper or white board, erasers, and erasable markers
- Sharing Faith questions and copies of "Faith at Home"
- green cloth to cover table or counter space for prayer
- a rock
- candle in heat-proof container, matches

Singing option

Use music from your faith community resources. The suggestion is a guide. Bring songbooks and music in a player.

For Sharing Faith groups

Put the Scripture citation with the questions on cards for group leaders.

Crossing the Ages Activity option: Stories about Facing Persecution

Eco-friendly "God Cares" Box: Have craft materials for each participant as described on the "Faith at Home" page. Practice making a sample box. Check with a care home about snack recommendations, such as wrapped sugar-free candies or small packets of healthy snacks. Using electronic or other communication, ask parents and sponsors to help with supplies. Arrange for delivery by representatives. If you choose, plan an appropriate time for the whole group to visit the care home and inform the members of the meeting place and time.

Snack option

Send a reminder to the sponsor providing the snack this week.

DISMISSAL SESSION

GATHERING

(15 MINUTES)

Catechumens, having heard the Sunday proclamation of the word, are dismissed from the Mass. Greet the catechumens as they arrive. Have them check in. Use the nametags from last session, or provide recycled cards, markers, and recycled lanyards or 3-foot pieces of yarn and staples. Invite new participants to make Ordinary Time nametags. Ask them to add a design or draw a symbol that in some way represents who they are.

GATHERING PRAYER RITUAL

All stand around the prayer focal point. Distribute the cloth, Bible, and rock to volunteers. Light the candle, and carefully hand it to someone. Ask the volunteers to do the actions as you say:

We spread a green cloth to remind us of our liturgical season, Ordinary Time.

We display a Bible, the symbol of God's word, and open it to the gospel according to Matthew.

We place a candle because Christ lights the way for all.

We add a rock, a reminder that God is our rock and salvation.

Pause for a moment of silence.

(†) **O God, in your wisdom
you have called us to discover more about your divine ways.
Bless our gathering here.
Send your Holy Spirit to open our ears that we may hear more about you,
open our minds and lips that we may share our thoughts about you,
and open our hearts that we may love others as you love us.
In the name of Jesus, we pray.**

All: Amen.

Invite the members when you lift a hand to respond with, "My soul rests in God alone." Prayerfully say each of the following verses based on Psalm 62, and call for the response by lifting a hand:

My salvation comes from God, in whom my soul rests. *(response)*

God is my rock and my salvation; I shall not be shaken from my stronghold.
(response)

Safety and glory is with God; Trust in God at all times, O my people! *(response)*

Song Suggestion: "With You By My Side" from *Give Your Gifts, Melody Book*, GIA Publications, Inc.

Extinguish the candle flame.

CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER

Invite everyone to sit in a circle. Introduce anyone new. Invite sharing about their experiences with the “Faith at Home” page from the previous session.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

All members sit in two circles so that each member faces a partner. If needed, the catechist fills in as a partner. Play “Rock, Paper, Scissors.” (Rock breaks scissors, scissors cuts paper, paper covers rock.) The partner who wins each round completes the sentence, “God is my ...” After one minute, members on the outside circle move left to a new partner and play again. Repeat as needed.

RECALLING THE WORD

(10 MINUTES)

Have everyone sit with Bibles in a circle. Use the following as a guide. For information, refer to “Insight for the Catechist” and the reflection on the “Faith at Home” page.

This week we heard from the book of the prophet Isaiah. We were told how God cares for us.

⇒ **What image was used to help us understand God’s loving care?**
(See Isaiah 49:14-15.)

We heard Saint Paul suggest that Christians should be seen as servants of Christ.
(See 1 Corinthians 4:1-5.)

⇒ **Why might you want others to see you as a servant of Christ?**

⇒ **What are your thoughts about the gospel story told this week?**
(See Matthew 6:24-34.)

Encourage the catechumens to make comments. Ask them to listen to each person’s thoughts without discussion.

Clarify that “mammon” is an ancient word meaning “wealth.”

⇒ **In what ways have you been anxious about clothes?**

⇒ **What does this gospel story teach about worrying?**

Summarize the members’ comments and insights. Emphasize:

The word of God speaks to us in many ways. While Scripture stories reveal God’s love for us and inspire us to do what is right and good, we each may notice something different. Our sharing helps us to learn from one another.

PRAYING INTERCESSIONS

(5 MINUTES)

We believe that God knows our concerns and hears our prayers, so let us petition God in prayer.

When I lift my hand please respond, “God, you know our needs; hear our prayer.”

- **Free us from worries about what we are to weak.** *(Lift a hand for the response.)*
- **Give us the will power to eat and drink what is good for our bodies.** *(Lift a hand for the response.)*
- **Guide us in ways to help those in need.** *(Lift a hand for the response.)*

Invite the members to contribute their own intercessions. Then conclude:

**God who gives us all good things,
hear the prayers we have spoken and those we hold in our hearts.
Help us to do what is right so that people everywhere may know your goodness.
We pray in unity with the Holy Spirit and through Christ Jesus
who shows us the way to you, the Father, one God for ever and ever.**

All: Amen.

Option: Break for a snack and social time.

CATECHETICAL SESSION

The Catechetical Session follows the Dismissal Session either immediately or at another time during the week. The Catechetical Session is designed for catechumens and parents or sponsors to grow in faith together. The status of the catechumens never is to be confused with that of baptized children preparing for confirmation or Eucharist, who may join in this catechesis as supportive companions (RCIA, Appendix III, #19).

GATHERING FOR CATECHESIS (5 MINUTES)

Welcome the catechumens, parents, sponsors, and any baptized children arriving from liturgy. If this Catechetical Session does not take place immediately following the Dismissal Session, plan an additional ten minutes and begin with the Gathering and Connecting segments in the Dismissal Session.

PRAYING

Invite everyone to stand around the prayer focal point. Use the (+) prayer from the Gathering Prayer Ritual in the Dismissal Session, another prayer, or sing a gathering song from liturgy.

ENGAGING THE WORD (15 MINUTES)

Form groups of up to six members.

Provide Bibles, large paper or white boards or board space, and erasable markers.

Assign one of the following passages to each group:

- Matthew 6:24-25
- Matthew 6:26-27
- Matthew 6:28-30
- Matthew 6:31-34

Ask each group to read the assigned verses together. Then, each group designs a poster to represent the message. Explain that they have ten minutes. Assist as needed.

As a whole group, have them share the posters and their messages.

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Isaiah 49:14-15
Psalm 62:2-3, 6-9
1 Corinthians 4:1-5
Matthew 6:24-34

Insight for the Catechist

Followers of Jesus cannot have as a priority both the ways of God and the worries that come with trying to become wealthy. One of these will become the priority.

God takes care of all species in creation according to the needs and abilities of each. God has provided humans with the necessary intelligence and created goods so that there are plenty of raw materials to provide food, drink, and clothing for all people.

Unfortunately, the forces of greed do take hold of some people. Christians need to stand up for the rights of all and seek to do God's will. Then, each living person will have a just share of God's created gifts.

We cannot solve the world's problems in a day. Do what you can each day to negate evil. Do not be incapacitated by worry.

SHARING FAITH

(15 MINUTES)

Form groups of four to six members. Provide Bibles. (If there are only a few participants, lead the discussion as a whole group.) Print the questions on large paper or marker board, or distribute questions on cards for an adult to lead. Circulate among the groups to offer support as needed. After eight minutes, ask a volunteer from each group to report one major insight.

CONVERSING ABOUT MATTHEW 6:24-34

Assign one citation from Matthew 6 to each small group, giving them their questions below to discuss.

- **Matthew 6:24-25**
 - ⇒ Why is it difficult to be doing what God wants while you are busy getting the things money can buy?
 - ⇒ What is important besides food and clothes?
- **Matthew 6:26-27**
 - ⇒ What good, nutritious foods does God provide?
 - ⇒ How is money wasted on things to eat and drink that are not good for our health?
- **Matthew 6:28-30**
 - ⇒ How does society pressure us to be concerned about clothing?
 - ⇒ In what ways can you be a servant of Christ by recycling good outgrown clothing?
- **Matthew 6:31-34**
 - ⇒ Why is it difficult to stop worrying about what we eat, drink, or wear?
 - ⇒ How can you help bring God's justice to people who do not have enough food to eat?

CARRYING OUT THE WORD

(5 MINUTES)

SUMMING UP

Invite everyone to stand around the prayer focal point. Encourage them to offer insights from this week's session. Then conclude with the following:

When we reflect on Scripture, some of our questions are answered while other questions continue to come to us. The Bible is a great source of inspiration on our spiritual journey. This week we are reminded not to worry. God takes care of our real needs while we work for God's reign of goodness in the world.

CLOSING PRAYER

Mention that anyone who wishes not to pray aloud may say, "Pass." Going around the circle, invite each person to complete the following prayer:

God who knows our needs, please help me not to worry about....

When everyone who wants has participated, raise your hands in blessing over the group, and say:

**Go forth from this place
free from worry and with God's blessing.
Do what is right,
and trust God who knows your needs.**

And may the Lord bless us
(make the Sign of the Cross on yourself as a model for everyone)
protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

Distribute the "Faith at Home" page. Collect the nametags.

Crossing the Ages Activity

(Optional activity: 20 minutes)

Eco-friendly "God Cares" Box (Social Justice Activity)

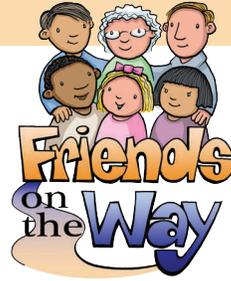
Depending on your schedule, the members and parents and sponsors may do this craft together during the session. Then, the children can show their families how to make boxes at home.

See the "Faith At Home" page. Gather everyone around the craft materials with space to work. Demonstrate making a box. Have adults or older members mark and cut the plastic jugs. Then the adults and children work together to create boxes.

Provide wrapped sugar-free candy or snack items to fill the recycled containers. Select parents or sponsors to deliver the gifts with a few members.

Extended-time option: As a group, visit a care home, and distribute the gift boxes to residents to show God cares.





Remember Sunday's Word

Isaiah 49:14-15
 Psalm 62:2-3, 6-9
 1 Corinthians 4:1-5
 Matthew 6:24-34

Faith at Home

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At a convenient time for the family, gather around the dining table or in the living room. Place a Bible opened to Matthew 6 in the center. Silence all electronics. Begin with a moment of quiet.

REFLECTING ON MATTHEW 6:24-34

“Dad, why can't I have this logo shirt? It's my favorite team! I've never seen one like it before.”

“M-o-o-o-m, buy me an ice cream. Ple-e-e-ase, I'm so-o-o hot. They have my favorite flavor!”

“I'm dying of thirst! I need something to drink right now. I can't wait until we get home.”

⇒ When has your family had similar experiences?

This week we hear how we are not to worry about what we will eat, drink, or wear. God knows our needs. We are to focus on doing what is right and good.

⇒ What are the worries of your household?

Choose one concern, and make a plan as a family to lessen that worry by doing what is right. See the examples below to help you get started.

<i>Causes of Worry</i>	<i>Doing What Is Right</i>
A parent is currently unemployed.	Decide how each member can help reduce one line-item on the family budget. Suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a lunch instead of buying it. • Buy off-brands. • Recycle cans and bottles for spending money. • Delay getting that new phone or game.
News story about people still suffering in Haiti.	Research online and contribute to an organization, such as Catholic Relief Services, that directly helps Haitians.

REFLECTING ON ISAIAH 49:14-15

God's totally loving care is compared to a mother with her baby. This Scripture passage offers us the metaphor of a nurturing mother to help us understand God's complete self-giving out of love.

- ⇒ What do you think of Isaiah's image of God as a nurturing mother?
- ⇒ What other images help you to know God?

REFLECTING ON 1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-5

The word "servant" comes from a word that meant "the lowest rower in the ship's galley." This rower's efforts assisted the stronger rower who rowed above. The image reminds us that we carry out the work that Jesus initiated. We are Jesus' assistants as we journey in faith.

Stewards are managers, not the owner. Christian stewards communicate what comes from God. Christ determines the trustworthy stewards and knows everyone's motives. We need not trouble ourselves about who is right or wrong. In the end, God will praise those who do what is right.

- ⇒ What does a servant of Christ do?
- ⇒ How, as stewards, do we communicate God's word to others by what we say and do?
- ⇒ Why are we cautioned not to spend our time bickering about the actions of others?

Eco-friendly "God Cares" Box

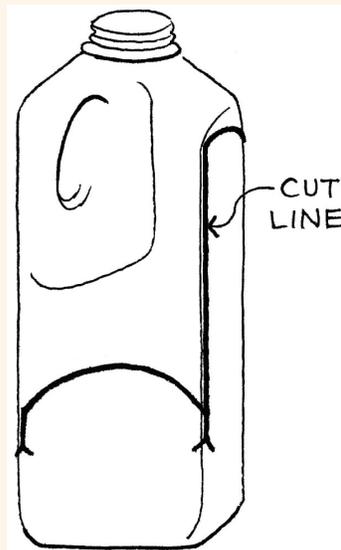
Make an eco-friendly snack container. Fill it with goodies, and offer it to someone as a reminder that God knows our needs.

Materials:

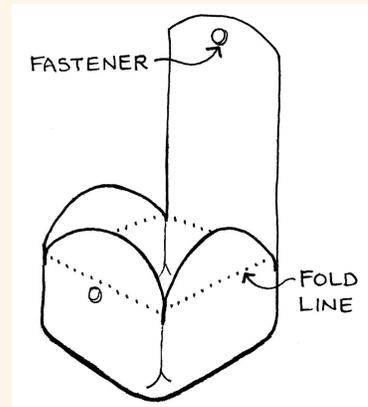
cleaned plastic ½ gallon milk jug with label removed; permanent markers; scissors; ruler; push-pin; adhesive-backed hook-and-loop fastener

Instructions:

1. Mark the jug according to the illustration. Cut along the solid lines.
2. Use a push-pin to prick every ¼ inch along the fold-lines 1¾ inches up from the bottom and across the top where it folds over to form a flap.



3. Make flaps pliable by folding with a back and forth motion along the pricked lines. Fold into a box. Attach the fastener.



4. Use permanent markers to print encouraging words on the box, such as "God knows your needs." Decorate the box.



5. Fill with a treat.

Give the gift to remind someone that God cares.