

St. Joseph's Family Activities

August 2022

Year C

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<https://www.theannunciation.org.uk/resources/>



Summer holidays – time to appreciate God's wonderful creation

I was reflecting on the popularity of gardening, “forest bathing” and other outdoor activities for our mental health. I wondered whether if for many people there is a disconnect between the technological lives we lead and the wonderful rhythm of the seasons that God has given us. For so many people, a life of faith is something that they don't have, yet we are all created for God and by God so have a deep “spiritual sense” of something that is greater than they are. The summer holidays are a great time to help the children to reconnect with the natural world. When you are out and about with them, don't just be in the countryside, but say little things like “I love the fact that God paints with so many colours!” (My children heard me saying that so many times that they began to say that themselves when they encountered a beautiful view). Stop and listen to the sounds of the natural world and give thanks to God for the birds, the sea.... And above all, pause for a moment to “be still” in His presence. May be say a spontaneous prayer. Notice the changes happening around, the leaves beginning to turn towards the end of the month, the blackberries ripening...

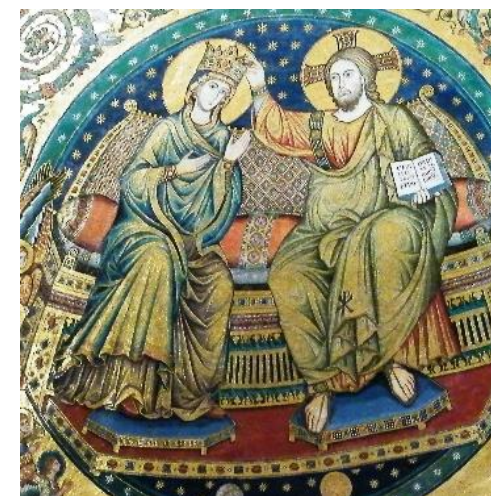
However you spend your summer, have a restful time and enjoy God's bounteous gifts.

Recent past copies are available from <https://www.theannunciation.org.uk/resources/>
If you are after copies that go back further, please contact me directly.

There are Four Dimensions of our Faith, and the activities all reflect one or more of each of these dimensions.

Here is Our Lady being crowned by her Son with His crown. The solemnity of the Assumption is when the Church celebrates that

Mary, who was conceived without sin is now reigning in heavenly glory. Whatever is happening in our lives we can always turn to her and ask her for her prayers as this picture shows us, she is right next to her Son and as we turn to her, she turns to Him and intercedes on our behalf. Mary, our mother and queen, pray for us.



The family is the “domestic Church” and if we are not able to gather in person with the parish, it's a good idea to set aside special times to pray with the family, even if it is just 10 minutes two or three times a week. These are graced moments. Light a candle and have a few moments' silence and remind everyone that they are in the presence of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These times are very precious and even if it is just a few minutes after a meal, it can be a fruitful time. Don't bite off more than you can chew! Start with just a few moments and build up the scope and variety of prayers slowly. Give everyone the opportunity to voice their own prayers as well as reciting traditional prayers.

**Speaking/Learning the faith
(which the Church calls
“professing the faith”)**

**Living it (in Christ) – i.e. the
choices we make in
everyday life**

**Celebrating it in the Liturgy
and the Sacraments**

**Christian
prayer.**

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Gospel for 19th Sunday Year C

7th August 2022

(This is the short version of the Gospel)

Luke 12:35-40

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘See that you are dressed for action and have your lamps lit. Be like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks. Happy those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. I tell you solemnly, he will put on an apron, sit them down at table and wait on them. It may be in the second watch he comes, or in the third, but happy those servants if he finds them ready. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what hour the burglar would come, he would not have let anyone break through the wall of his house. You too must stand ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.’

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion on the Gospel

- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

Today's Gospel is about being ready for Christ's return at the end of time. Being a Christian is not about "being good" but it's about living in hope of Eternal Life. That can come at any time – because we don't know when we will die, and we don't know when Christ will return at the end of time. You might want to give a bit of background at the beginning and here is a very good explanation of the Traditions behind Jewish weddings and the link with the end of time.

<https://free.messianicbible.com/feature/ancient-jewish-wedding-customs-and-yeshuas-second-coming/>

Q: Jesus gives us three examples of people being ready, what are they? (A: Men waiting for their master to return from a wedding feast, servants waiting for their master to return, and a householder being prepared for a burglar.)

Q: What will the master do when he gets back to his servants? (A: Put on an apron and serve the servants)

Q: If Jesus is our master, what does this mean about Jesus? (A: That He will serve us!)

Q: What does it mean, to serve someone? (A: To look after someone.)

Q: How does Jesus look after us even now? (A: He answers our prayers [like any wise person, the answer is sometimes no!] but above all He works in the sacraments to make us holy.)

Q: This Gospel is about getting ready for Jesus to come back at the end of time. How do we get ready for visitors at home? (A: Open.)

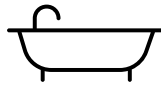
Q: If we get ready by cleaning and tidying up at home, how can we clean and tidy up ourselves? (A: Various – saying sorry when we have done wrong, going to Confession, helping at home, saying our prayers, telling people about Jesus.....)

Q: We wash at night before going to bed to make sure our bodies are clean, so we can have a daily “spiritual” wash. This prayer is called the *Examen* and it's a way of thinking about how close we have been to Jesus during the day.

Pray the examen now (miss out the references to the bedtime routine!) and then at night each day before going to sleep, you can think about each of these questions as you get ready for bed.

1. Become aware of God's presence.

(As you bath or shower) Become aware that Jesus is with you right now and that He loves you more than you will ever know.



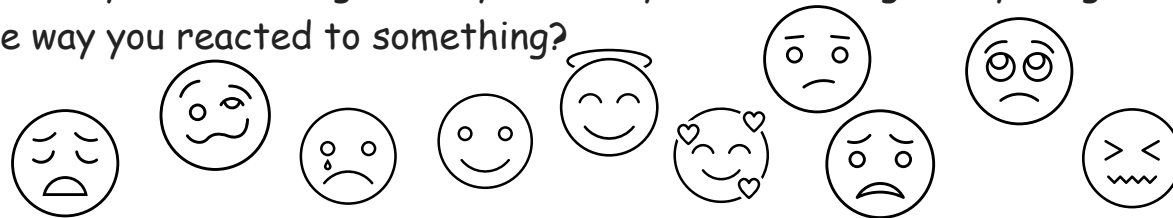
2. Review the day with gratitude.

(As you brush your teeth) Think about all the good things that happened during the day. What was the best thing to happen?

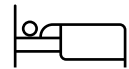




3. Pay attention to your emotions.

(As you put on your night clothes) Think about what made you happy and what made you sad during the day? Could you have changed anything, maybe the way you reacted to something?



4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.



(As you get into bed) Think about one thing from the day that you want to talk to Jesus about - maybe it was something that made you really happy - you can say thank you to Jesus,  or something that you did that hurt someone, and you can say sorry. 

5. Look toward to tomorrow.

(As you go to sleep, [ZZzzzz]) Think about how tomorrow, which is a new day with fresh things to do, and that it's and another day to walk closely with Jesus.



Gospel for the Solemnity of the Assumption, Year C, 14th August 2022

Luke 1:39-56 (Edited version below)

Mary went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. ... And Mary said:

'My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my Saviour; because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid.

Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed,

for the Almighty has done great things for me.

Holy is his name,

and his mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear him.

He has shown the power of his arm, he has routed the proud of heart.

He has pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly.

The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich sent empty away.

He has come to the help of Israel his servant, mindful of his mercy

– according to the promise he made to our ancestors –

of his mercy to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then went back home.

The Gospel of the Lord. R:/Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Children's liturgy of the word for this week

Discussion on the Gospel



- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

The solemnity of the Assumption has been moved to today from tomorrow 15th August) in England and Wales. There is no scriptural account of the Assumption, but the Church teaches that Mary went up to heaven body and soul at the end of her earthly life. Why? Because the Church also teaches that Mary was conceived without sin and remained free from sin all her life. St Paul teaches that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6.23) and also the original commandment to Adam and Eve was that if they ate from the fruit of the forbidden tree, they would die. So as Mary had not sin, it stands to reason that she did not suffer death as we do. The questions below are based on the Magnificat.

Q: What are some of the things Mary says? (A: Various – lines from the Magnificat.)

Q. Mary says that all generations will call her blessed. Why? (A: She is blessed because she was the mother of Jesus Christ Our Lord.)

Q: Who is "the Almighty" that Mary refers to? (A: God [the Father].)

Q: God saved Mary from sin before she was born so that she did not need to be baptised. What happens when we are baptised? (A: Various answers including water poured over us.)

Q: The important thing about Baptism is that we are cleaned from all our sins. Why do we need to be cleaned of our sins? (A: So that we can go to heaven.)

Q: Mary talks about God's mercy. What is God's mercy? (A: The Father forgives us through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.)

Q: As well as our sins being removed when we are baptised, when else does Jesus forgive our sins? (A: Sacrament of Reconciliation and penitential rite in Mass.)

Q: Mary is now in heaven with her Son Jesus. She is very good at asking Him for what we need. What can we ask Mary to ask Jesus for? (A: Open.)

Q: Finish by praying the Hail Mary and drawing a picture of Mary in heaven with Jesus and all the angels and saints inside the shape on the next page.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
HOLY Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death, Ame n .snus. Ame n

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Gospel for 21st Sunday of Ordinary Time Year C

21st August 2022

Luke 13:22-30

Through towns and villages Jesus went teaching, making his way to Jerusalem. Someone said to him, 'Sir, will there be only a few saved?' He said to them, 'Try your best to enter by the narrow door, because, I tell you, many will try to enter and will not succeed.

'Once the master of the house has got up and locked the door, you may find yourself knocking on the door, saying, "Lord, open to us" but he will answer, "I do not know where you come from." Then you will find yourself saying, "We once ate and drank in your company; you taught in our streets" but he will reply, "I do not know where you come from. Away from me, all you wicked men!"

'Then there will be weeping and grinding of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves turned outside. And men from east and west, from north and south, will come to take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.

'Yes, there are those now last who will be first, and those now first who will be last.'

The Gospel of the Lord: R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion on the Gospel

- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

Many people have heard the saying about the difficulty of entering through the narrow door/gate. Some commentaries suggest that there were different sized gates into the city of Jerusalem and the narrow (pedestrian) gate was the easiest to access, but only one person at a time could pass through, whereas the wider gate where loaded camels and carts could gain access was further around. However, in the light of the rest of the Gospel, the message is that just going to Church does not automatically make us a Christian. A Christian is someone who has a real personal with Jesus, not just someone who performs his outward actions. It's a challenge for us all.

Q: What kind of door is Jesus talking about? (A: A narrow door.)

Q: Jesus is asked about who will be saved. What does "being saved" mean here? (A: Going to heaven and being with Jesus for ever and ever.)

Q: Jesus wants us all to live with Him in heaven but the way to heaven is through the "narrow door". Think of a house which only has a narrow side gate and no drive.

What will happen if a big car tries to go through the narrow gate? (A: It will get stuck.)

Q: If you are in that car and want to visit the people in that house, what do you have to do? (A: Get out of the car and walk through the gate.)

Q: Walking through the narrow gate is more difficult and if you are carrying things you might have to squeeze your things through. Jesus is saying that we have to make an effort to get to know Him well so that we will enjoy being in heaven. One way of getting to know Him well is to spend more time talking to Him in prayer. What prayers do you know? (A: Open.)

Q: One way we can pray more effectively is to use our hands to give us a structure. We begin by praising God then thanking Him for what we have, then we listen to Him in the Bible, then think about what that means to us and finally, our own needs and intentions. Lets do that right now.

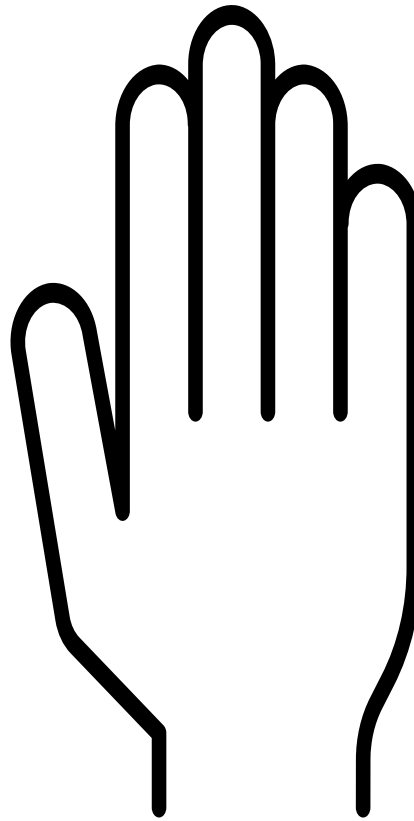
Either use the template on the next page to invite oral prayers (when you get to the tall finger just ask for suggestions of things that Jesus says in the Gospel today) or if working as a group, children can write out prayers on post-it and stick them to a large hand on a large piece of paper.

Index finger - list all the good things we have in our lives. Say thank you to the Father for these gifts.

Tallest finger - nearest to heaven. What from the Gospel can we remember?

Ring finger - commitment. How can I change after listening to the Gospel?

Thumbs up for God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit! How can we praise God?



Little finger - last but not last me... what do I want to ask the Father for in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit?

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Gospel for 22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year C, 28th August 2022

Luke 14:1,7-14

On a sabbath day Jesus had gone for a meal to the house of one of the leading Pharisees; and they watched him closely. He then told the guests a parable, because he had noticed how they picked the places of honour. He said this, 'When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take your seat in the place of honour. A more distinguished person than you may have been invited, and the person who invited you both may come and say, "Give up your place to this man." And then, to your embarrassment, you would have to go and take the lowest place. No; when you are a guest, make your way to the lowest place and sit there, so that, when your host comes, he may say, "My friend, move up higher." In that way, everyone with you at the table will see you honoured. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the man who humbles himself will be exalted.'

Then he said to his host, 'When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not ask your friends, brothers, relations or rich neighbours, for fear they repay your courtesy by inviting you in return. No; when you have a party, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; that they cannot pay you back means that you are fortunate, because repayment will be made to you when the virtuous rise again.'

The Gospel of the Lord: R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion on the Gospel

- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

Today's Gospel neatly follows on from last week's about the first being last. Here it's about not putting oneself above others and equally importantly, recognising that everyone is called by Jesus to share in His kingdom. With older children you may like to consider how they could act to support/have a party for those who would not otherwise have one... with younger children the focus is on recognising that our gifts and talents come from God.

Q: Where does Jesus say we should sit if we are invited to a party? (A: At the lowest place [the back].)

Q: What might happen if we sit at the back? (A. We might be invited to sit at the front.)

Q: The theme of the Gospel that of humility, what does "humility" mean? (A: Recognising that other people may be better than us at something and saying "well done" to them when they do something well... not boasting, but recognising that if we are good at something it is because God has given us that talent...)

Q: Who do we know is better than us at something? (A: Open.)

Q: What are we good at? [These are talents that God has given us] (A: Open.)

With younger children at this point, lead them in some prayers e.g., Thank you heavenly Father that X is good at football/Y is good at cooking/drawing/swimming etc Then they can draw pictures of themselves doing what they are good at.

Q: If we are having a party, who do we invite to our party? (A: Our friends.)

Q: Who does Jesus say that we should invite? (A: The poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind.)

Q: What does Jesus ask us to do this? (A: Various, e.g. Because maybe they don't get invites to parties...no one like/cares about them)

Q: Apart from inviting people who are poor or with disabilities to parties, how else can we help them? (A: Various, e.g. fundraising for charities that support the poor etc or maybe putting on a party at church for people who don't have many friends....)

Finish with a prayer asking the Holy Spirit to inspire them what to do, then on a large sheet of paper "brainstorm ideas. Do follow this up in a couple of weeks.

This is me using the gifts my Heavenly Father has given me:

Thank you, Heavenly Father, for my gift
of _____