

St. Joseph's Children's Liturgy of the Word

June 2023 (Year A)



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St. Joseph is the patron saint of the family, and the family is the “domestic Church ” These sheets were developed to support my parish of St. Joseph in Great Malvern, Worcestershire, but they are now used by parishes and schools not just in the

UK, but some are sent to contacts abroad as well. As always, feedback and suggestions are most welcome.

Sunday Mass is the cornerstone of our week; These resources are designed to be used in a family setting or in Children's Liturgy of the Word at Mass, or in the classroom. Please make them your own and feel free to pass them on for free.

Back to “Ordinary Time”

As is said every year, no time is “ordinary” and the first two Sundays in June continue to be special days; we celebrate that God is a blessed Trinity of persons and then that Jesus Christ gave us Himself as food so that we might be ever closer to Him in this life. In our fallen human natures, we cannot “understand” the mystery of the Holy Trinity, but we can know that the Divine Persons never work alone. The Father creates through His Son, who is the Eternal Word, by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. So, the more we refer to all three Divine Persons in our talking about our faith, the more we can enter into this wonderful mystery for ourselves and help our children to grow up with an awareness that “God” = Father, Son and Holy Spirit. What we want to avoid is thinking that “God” = “the Father”. In St. Patrick's shamrock, each “leaf-let” is a Divine Person and the whole “leaf” represents “God”.

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

Professing the faith (speaking about it and learning the faith)

Celebrating our faith in the liturgy and the sacraments

C17 Tabernacle, Basilica of St. Ambrose © Carol Ann Harnett



Living the faith in Christ (making choices by the grace of Jesus Christ)

A prayer-filled life where the Our Father takes centre stage

The month of the Sacred Heart



This tiny window is in the Sacred Heart chapel at Maryvale house in Birmingham.

The chapel is so tiny that there are only about 8-10 chairs in it. It is hidden inside the house and can't be seen from the outside. The heart is a sign of love.

Although we can't other people's hearts, we see the effects of their love. One effect of Jesus' love is His gift of Himself to us at each Mass in Holy Communion.

O Sacred heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



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Gospel for 4th June Trinity Sunday Year A

John 3:16-18

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

‘God the Father loved the world
so much that he gave his
only Son,
so that everyone who believes in
him may not be lost
but may have eternal life.
For the Father sent his Son into
the world
not to condemn the world,
but so that through him the world
might be saved.
No one who believes in him will
be condemned;
but whoever refuses to believe is
condemned already,
because he has refused to believe
in the name of God’s only
Son.’

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

Discussion on the Gospel

I have used the phrase “God the Father” here and “the Father” later instead of “God” to help the children realise that “God” means Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Otherwise, it’s easy to think that Jesus and the Spirit are not God. None of us can grasp the mystery of the Holy Trinity, so it is useful for us too to think about “the Father” when we hear/say “God”.

Q: What did God the Father do? (A: Loved the world/send His only Son.)

Q: Who is the only Son of the Father? (A: Jesus Christ/Jesus.)

Q: Why did the Father send His Son into the world? (A: Not to condemn the world/so that we can have Eternal Life.)

Q: What does “condemn” mean? (A: To tell off.)

Q: What is “Eternal Life”? (A: Knowing and loving the Jesus who leads us to His Father by the Holy Spirit here on earth and for ever in heaven.)

Q: The Father sent His Son who was given the name Jesus when He was born to save us. Do you know what “Jesus” means? (A: God Saves.).

Q: How did Jesus save the world? (A: He died on the cross.)

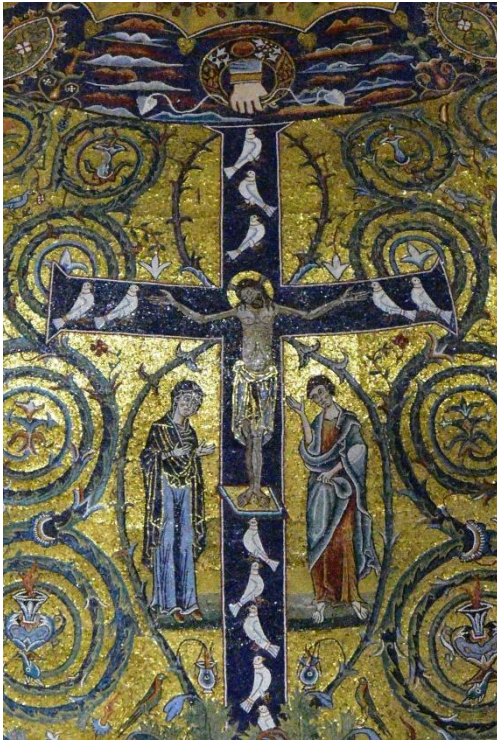
Q: When Jesus was baptised, the Father sent another helper to help His Son. Who was that? (A: The Holy Spirit).

Q: The Holy Spirit is really the love between the Father and the Son – a love so strong that it's God at work. When does the Holy Spirit come to us? (A: Our Baptism and in all the sacraments.)

Q: This shows that the Father loves us too. He sends us to Holy Spirit so that we can love Him and Jesus. What do we call the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit? (A: The Holy Trinity.)

Q: When do we especially talk/pray to the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit)? (A: When we make the Sign of the Cross.)

Let us now slowly make the Sign of the Cross and as we do, think that we are talking to God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



The Holy Trinity in Art

This is the centrepiece of a wonderful mosaic in the basilica of San Clemente in Rome.

The gold background reflects the light and reminds us of heaven. Jesus is on the cross, which is black, reminding us that He came to save us from our sins.

Can you see the Father's hand coming down out of heaven holding a wreath? That indicates that the Father is showering his Son with His love and delight as the wreath is a wreath of victory.

What is sitting on the cross with Jesus? (doves).

Doves are a symbol of the Holy Spirit. How many doves are there? (12)

This represents the 12 Apostles who were filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and went out to tell everyone about Jesus.

The Father sends His Holy Spirit to help us to tell other people about Jesus.

Jesus, God the Son, dies on the Cross so that we can enjoy Eternal Life.

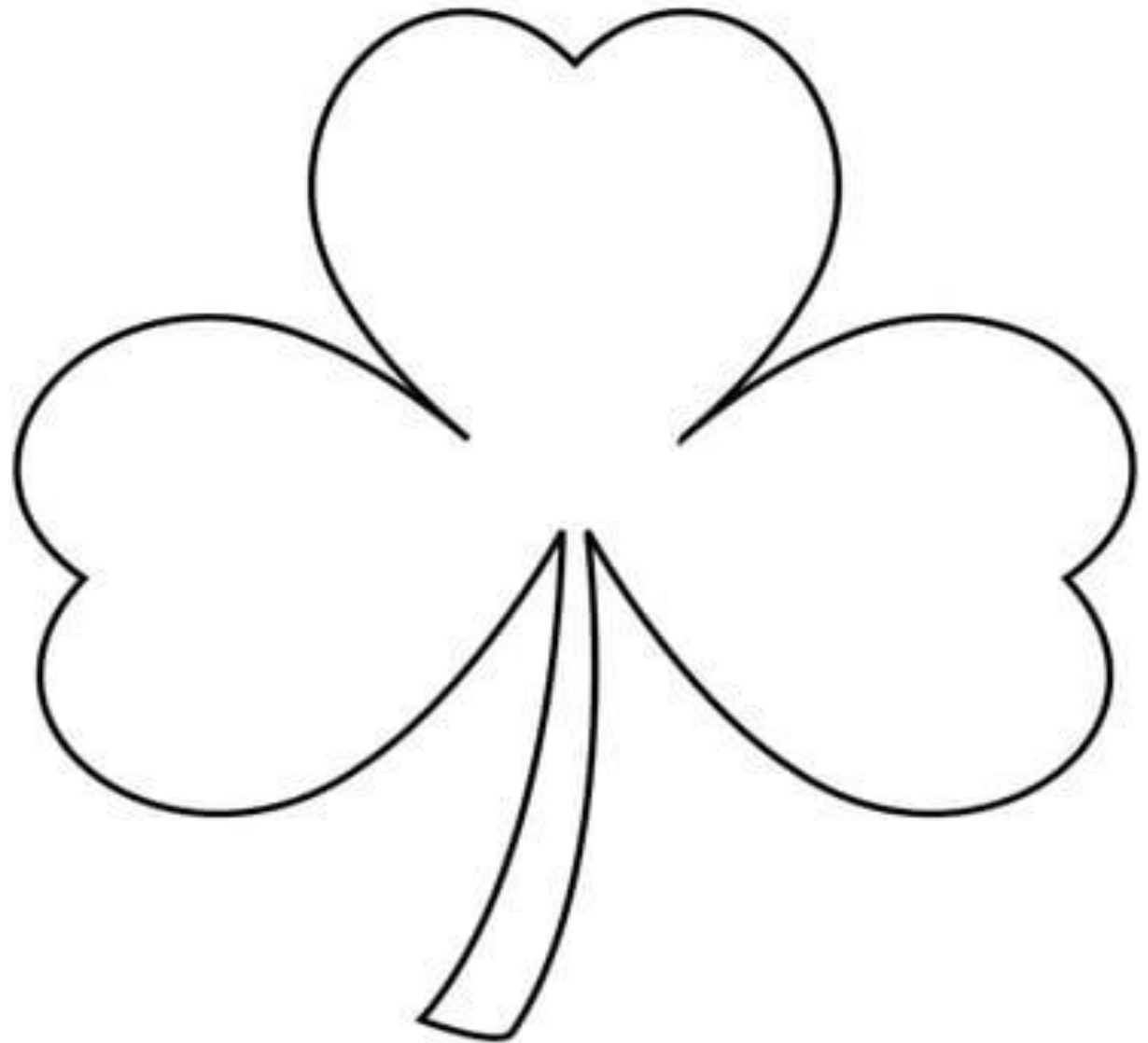
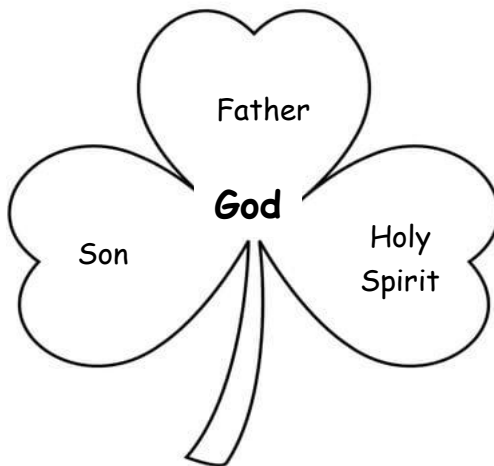
The Father is in heaven and the Holy Spirit helps us to love His Son Jesus Christ.

Colour in the greyscale picture to match the one in colour.



St. Patrick and the shamrock:

Whilst St. Patrick is associated with the shamrock as an image of the Trinity, it is important to label it correctly. Remember that the whole leaf represents *God* and each of the segments represent a Divine Person. Here is a leaf to cut out, label and colour. May be as you say the *Glory-be*, children can point to the different segments.





Children's liturgy of the word for this week

Discussion on the Gospel

Gospel for 11th June Corpus Christi Year A

John 6:51-58

Jesus said to the crowd:

'I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.'

...

'I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you. Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day.'

...

He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me.

This is the bread come down from heaven; not like the bread our ancestors ate: they are dead, but anyone who eats this bread will live for ever.'

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

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

I have cut a bit of this Gospel reading to avoid some of the repetitions. (I love the rhythm of John's Gospel in this chapter but most of it would go over the children's head, I expect!)

Q: What did Jesus say that He is? (A: The living bread which came down from heaven.)

Q: What does Jesus say will happen to those who eat the bread of life? (A: They will live for ever.)

Q: Where do we live for ever? (A: In Heaven.)

Q: When do people receive Jesus the Bread of Life? (A: When they receive Holy Communion.)

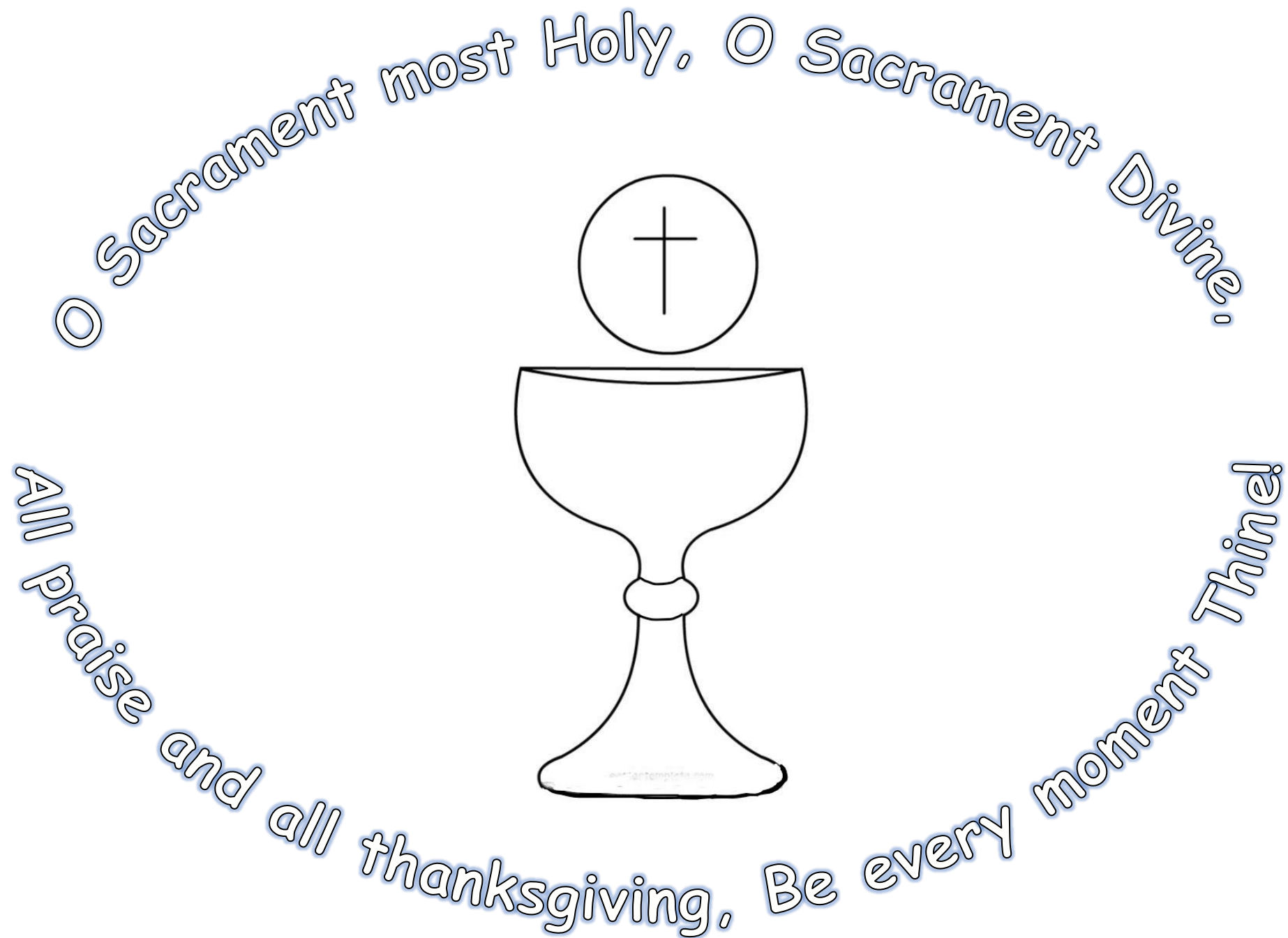
Q: When do we eat ordinary bread? (A: Breakfast/packed lunches/tea.....)

Q: Jesus says that when we receive Holy Communion, it is not ordinary bread but Jesus Himself. What does the priest say just before each person receives Jesus in Holy Communion? (A: Body of Christ.)

Q: Jesus gives us His Body which means that He gives us Himself. When we receive Him in Holy Communion He comes to live in us and we in Him. That is amazing... Jesus actually comes to live in us! What do we do if people are coming to visit us at home? (A: Open: tidy up/clean...)

Q: Mass is a very special time of the week as we all meet Jesus even if we have not made our First Holy Communion yet. We listen to Jesus in the readings and talk to Him in the prayers. What can we do to be ready to be close to Jesus at Mass? (A: Various; e.g. arrive on time, wear special/smart clothes, behave during Mass, watch the priest, kneel during the consecration, look up when the bell rings....)

There is a very old prayer that we can say to Jesus in Holy Communion. It is on the next page for you to colour in and learn by heart. Lets say it now to finish:





Gospel for 11th Sunday of Ordinary Time Year A

18th June 2023

Matthew 9:36-10:8

When Jesus saw the crowds he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest.'

He summoned his twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits with power to cast them out and to cure all kinds of diseases and sickness.

These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, the one who was to betray him. These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them as follows:

'Do not turn your steps to pagan territory, and do not enter any Samaritan town; go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. And as you go, proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. You received without charge, give without charge.'

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

The aim of today's session is to focus on the names of the 12 Apostles.

Q: Jesus called (summoned) his 12 Apostles. What are their names? (A: See below.)

Q: Why did Jesus call them? (A: To go out and tell other people about Him/ to cure the sick.)

Q: Let's see how much we know about each of these 12 Apostles. These are photos of great big statues of the 12 Apostles in Rome [St. John Lateran which is the pope's cathedral]. What do we know about each of them? *Use the pictures on the next page. As you place each one, say the name and ask the children what, if anything they know about them. It may be better to enlarge the individual pictures if you can. (I don't seem to have one of St. Matthias, so I've used another picture.)*

Peter (Simon): he was renamed Peter by Jesus, was the spokesperson of the Apostles and the first Pope... the children may offer more information on him.)

Andrew: Was Peter's brother and introduced Simon Peter to Jesus. Andrew died on an x shaped cross. Was a fisherman.

James & John: Were brothers, fishermen, John stood by the Cross, only Apostle not martyred, wrote John's Gospel. James was known as James the greater.

Philip: Born at Bethsaida and was a disciple of John the Baptist first. Asked Jesus to show Him the Father (Jn. 14:8.)

Bartholomew: Also called Nathaniel in John's Gospel. Was introduced to Jesus by Philip.

Thomas: Who both denied Jesus' Resurrection and was the first to call Him "my Lord and my God". Traditionally he went to India to take the Good News of salvation.

Matthew: A tax collector and probably the originator of the Gospel of Matthew.

James, son of Alphaeus: Also called "James the Less". He wrote the letter of James in the Bible and was the Bishop of Jerusalem at the very beginning of the Church. He was beheaded by the Romans.

Thaddeus: Also called Jude. He is patron saint of lost and desperate causes.

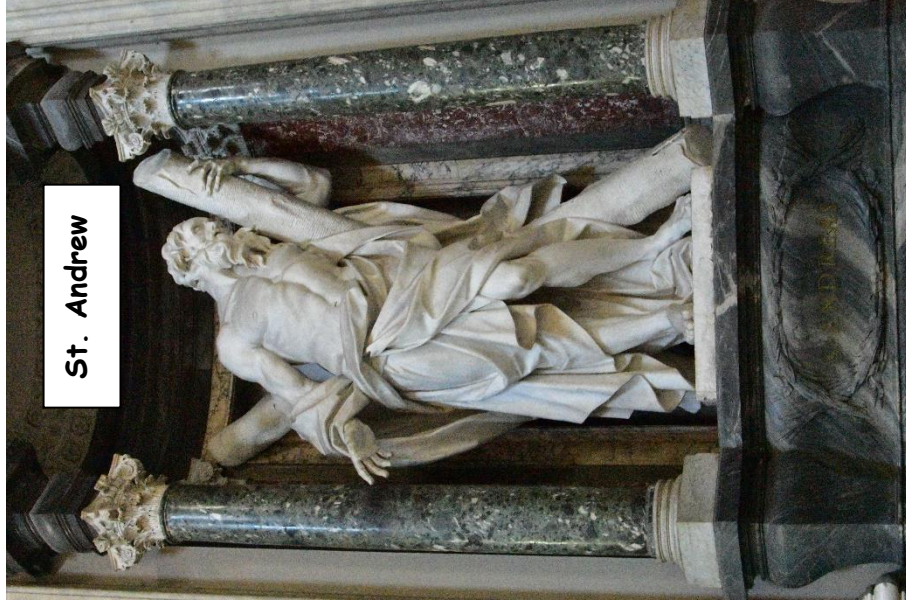
Simon the Zealot: Was very devout and shares his feast day with St. Jude (Thaddeus).

Judas Iscariot: Betrayed Jesus. Was replaced by **St. Matthias** after the Resurrection (Acts 1:26)

Finish by inviting each of the Apostles in turn to pray for us. E.g. St. Peter, pray for us....



St. Peter



St. Andrew



St. James the Greater



St. John



St. Bartholomew



St. Matthew



St. Philip



St. Thomas



**St. James the Less
(Son of Alphaeus)**



St. Simon the Zealot





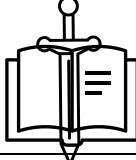
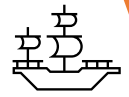


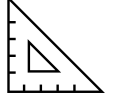
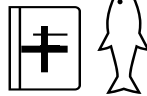

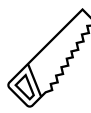
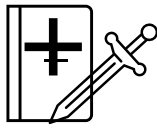


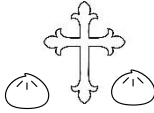
St. Jude/Thaddeus



St. Matthias

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Symbols of the Apostles			
Did you know that each of the Apostles have symbols? The symbols come from the lives of the Apostles. Some of these are just traditions and we don't know for certain the how each of them died. See if you can match the Apostle with the symbol. One is done for you.			
St Andrew, who was St. Peter's brother, died on a diagonal cross			St. Bartholomew (St. Nathaniel) is traditionally thought to have been cut to death with knives
St. James the Great (son of Jonah, John's brother) has the scallop shell as his symbol as he traditionally died in Compostella in Spain and the coast there was known for these shells.			St. James the Less may have been sawn in half (but he was probably stoned to death).
St. John (author of the Gospel and the Apostle who stood at the foot of the cross). There's a Tradition that he survived drinking from a poisoned chalice.			Judas Iscariot has a money bag as he looked after the shared money for the Apostles and sadly stole from it too (Jn. 12:6).
St. Jude travelled by ship on his missionary journeys with St. Simon (the Zealot).			St. Matthew was a tax collector before he met Jesus and is represented by three purses.
St. Matthias was chosen to replace Judas and is symbolised by an open bible and sword by which he was traditionally said to have been beheaded			St. Paul who was chosen by Jesus after His Ascension, is represented by a Bible and a sword. He is the author of a lot of the letters of the New Testament and his head was cut off with a sword
St. Peter is represented by crossed keys as Jesus gave him the "keys of the gates to heaven" (Mt. 16:18)			St. Philip is represented by loaves beside a cross as it was he who offered Jesus the small boy's loaves before the feeding of the 5,000
St. Simon (The zealot) was a fisherman and preached the Good News that Jesus is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament			St Thomas traditionally went to India and built a Church there and the carpenter's set square is his sign



Gospel for 12th Sunday of Easter Year C

25th June 2023

Matthew 10:26-33

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Do not be afraid. For everything that is now covered will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops.

'Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell. **Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.**

'So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Discussion on the Gospel

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

The questions will be based on the words in bold which is probably easier for children to understand. The activity turns to consider Mary who looks after us as well as God the Father. On the next page are two versions of activities – the Hail Mary for younger ones to colour in and a space for older children to write their own prayer on the other page.

Q: What does Jesus say here? (A: Do not be afraid.)

Q: What could Jesus have bought for a penny? (A: Two sparrows.)

Q: What Jesus is saying is that the Father knows every single tiny sparrow. If God the Father cares about tiny sparrows, how much more does He care about each one of us.

What does Jesus say about the hair on our heads? (A: That God the Father knows how many hairs we have on our heads!)

Q: What does this show us about the Father? (A: That He loves us and cares for us/that He knows more about us than we do ourselves.)

Q: So why must we not be afraid? (A: Because the Father loves us and will look after us.)

Q: When might we be afraid? (A: Open.)

Q: We don't only have our Father in heaven looking after us, but we also have Mary, our heavenly mother looking after us. Look at this picture of Mary with Jesus (on the next page). What do you notice about her dress? (A: It's huge/red/made of velvet.)

Q: This enormous red dress symbolises Mary's grace. Mary loves us so much because we have been joined to Jesus in Baptism. What is Jesus doing in this picture? (A: He's looking at a book that Mary is reading to Him.)

Q: Let us shut our eyes and imagine we are sitting on Mary's lap. Feel the warmth of her heartbeat. Hear her soft voice gently talking to us. Hear her telling us that we don't need ever to be afraid, as she is looking after us. Now feel Jesus' love pouring into your hearts. Feel His peace. We don't ever need to feel afraid.

Let us finish by saying the Hail Mary together. Hail Mary...



We don't ever need to feel afraid, because we have God the Father who knows every hair on our heads looking after us, but also Mary, our heavenly mother praying for us. We can imagine that we are like Jesus, sitting on her lap listening to her gentle voice telling us that she is with us all the time.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is
with thee; blessed art thou among
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. Amen.

Write your own prayer to Mary asking her to be with you and to look after you when you are afraid.

