

BE KIND, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD

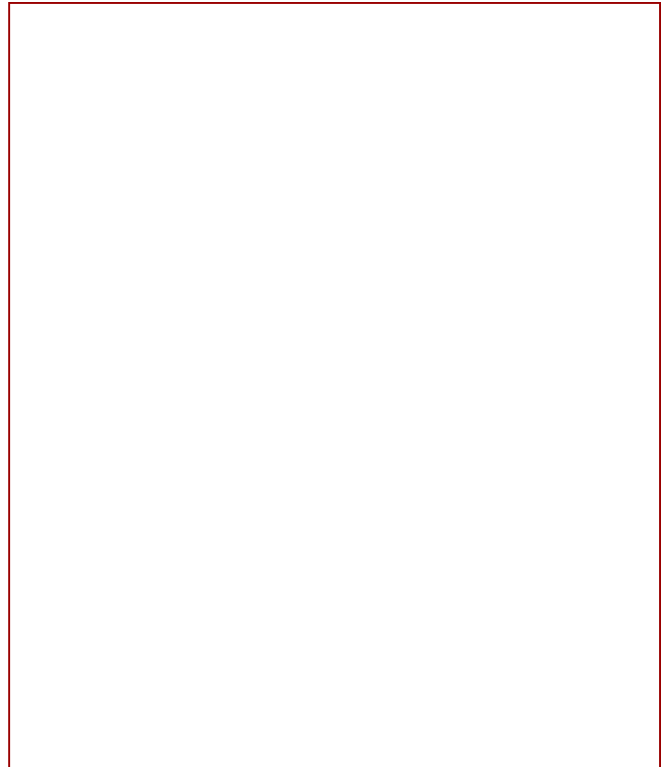
One day Jesus taught His disciples the following lesson:

Treat other people just as you would like other people to treat you. It is easy to love people who love you.

It is also easy to be kind to people who are kind to you, and to share with people who share with you. Even mean people are kind to those they like! But it is hard to love those who do not love you, or to be kind to those who are not kind to you, or to share with those who do not share with you.

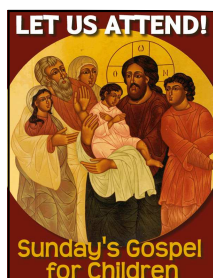
Love everyone, be kind to everyone, share with everyone-- even those who are not kind to you. This is what your Father in heaven wants you to do.

Draw how you can be kind to someone.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Jesus wants us to help each other. He wants us to try especially hard to help people that are not always nice or kind to us.
2. Can you think of someone at school, or the playground, or in your neighborhood, who is not always kind to you?
3. Pretend that kid has just hit you, or said you couldn't join in a game. What do you feel like doing?
4. Most of us want to hit back, or be mean, that would be an easy choice, but that would just bring more meanness



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Pre-12

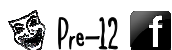


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Draw and color a picture that shows how you can be kind to someone.



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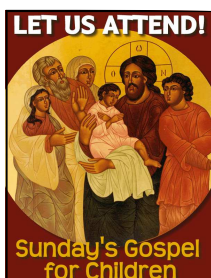
BE KIND, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD

Materials:

- * 2 straws
- * yarn, any color
- * crayons, colored pencils, and/or markers
- * white drawing paper
- * construction paper, any color
- * hole punch
- * glue
- * scissors
- * stapler

Procedure:

1. After reading the gospel story to your child, take time to review the discussion questions following the story.
2. Discuss with your child how God asks us to show mercy and love toward all people. Sometimes that is hard to do, especially if someone has been mean or hurtful. Ask your child why it might be good to treat them with love, even if they are mean. (Because that's what God wants us to do. Also, we don't know why people act mean. Maybe they have had a bad day or don't receive lots of love in their life. Since we know about God and His love, it's our job to show His love towards everybody, so they, too, can feel love.)
3. Brainstorm some ways to show love and mercy towards all people. Discuss examples of times when you or your child have had to be nice and show love when it was hard to do.
4. Choose 4 of these examples to illustrate for a "Love Your Enemies" mobile.
5. Fold and cut the white drawing paper into 4 equal sections.
6. Have your child draw the examples on each of the 4 pieces of paper.
7. Fold and cut the construction paper into 4 equal sections.
8. Glue the 4 drawings onto the 4 pieces of construction paper.
9. Using the hole punch, make a hole at the top of each drawing.
10. Cut 2 pieces of yarn, of equal length.
11. Thread each piece of yarn through each straw. Make sure that an equal amount of yarn is left hanging from the ends of each straw.
12. Make an "X" with the 2 straws and staple in the middle to secure the straws together.
13. Tie each of the 4 yarn ends to the pictures drawn.
14. Use an additional piece of yarn to hang the mobile.
15. Hang your child's mobile in a place where they can be reminded to love ALL people!



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BE KIND, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD

One day, Jesus was talking about loving others. First, He said that we should treat other people like we want them to treat us.

He also said that if we love someone who loves us, that is not a special thing. He said even sinners do that. If we are kind to people who are kind to us, that is not special, either. Even sinners do that. And, if we share with people who share with us, that is not special because sinners share when they know someone will share with them.

But Jesus said that we need to love our enemies. He said we should do what is good and share with others. He said we should not think they will give us anything back. If we do this, we will be God's children.

Jesus said that God is kind to everyone, even people who are not thankful. He is even kind to bad people! Jesus said we should be full of mercy, just like our Father God is.

Draw a picture of each scene.

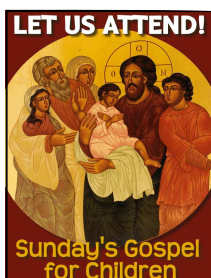
1 Sometimes I get hurt by someone.

2. I can strike back.

3. Or, I can choose to be kind instead.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Is there someone who has been mean to you? Think about school, the playground, or your neighborhood.
2. How would you like that person to treat you? How should you treat that person?
3. Jesus wants us to treat others the way we want to be treated, even when we don't feel like it.
4. Jesus taught us that the most important thing is to spread goodness in the world, and not meanness. So, if someone is mean to us, we have a choice. We can either be mean back, which brings more evil in the world; or, we can pray, "Jesus, help me be kind to that person," and choose to be kind.



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BE MERCIFUL

The Lord said, “As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

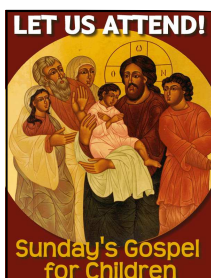
“But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.”



Image courtesy of sxc.hu

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. This Gospel ends with the call to "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." What does the word mercy or merciful mean? To help figure the meaning of this word out, try looking it up in a dictionary and also asking two people you know to define the word. You can compare the three definitions you found.
2. Why does the Gospel say we should be merciful?
3. How are you like your mom and dad? How do you look like them? Act like them? Sound like them?
4. How does the reading tell us we can become children of God the Father?
5. If we become children of God by being merciful the way God is merciful then we need to find out how God is merciful. To do that, listen in the liturgy for places where we say "Lord have mercy." What kinds of things does the priest or deacon ask God for, before we say, "Lord have mercy"?
6. How are your parents, teachers, friends, or people at church merciful, the way God is merciful?
7. What is one thing you can do this week to be merciful to someone?



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Characters: Narrator, Jesus,

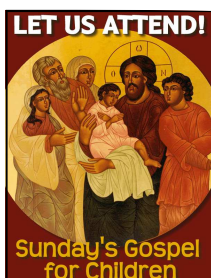
Narrator: The Lord said,

Jesus: As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.



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"But love your enemies,

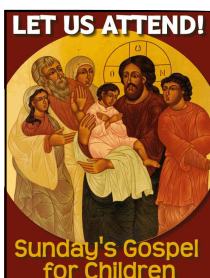
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2. Why does the text suggest we should be merciful?
3. How do you know you are a child of your mom and dad? What makes you their child and not someone else's child?
4. How does the text tell us we become children of God the Father? How is that similar to being a child of your mom and dad? How is it different?
5. If we become children of God by being like God, by being merciful as God is merciful, then we need to find out how God is merciful. Try to find the places where we say "Lord have mercy" in the liturgy. What do we ask God for when we say "Lord have mercy?"
6. What do your discoveries tell us about how we can be like the Father? If God is merciful to us by (answers to question 5), how can we be merciful to others?
7. What examples of people being merciful can you think of? How have your classmates been merciful? Your teachers? Parents? Friends?



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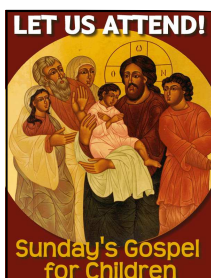
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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What does the word mercy or merciful mean?
2. Why does the text suggest we should be merciful?
3. What makes you the son or daughter of your parents and not someone else's?
4. How does the text tell us we become a son or daughter of God the Father? How is that similar to being a daughter or son of your parents? How is it different?
5. How do we ask God to be merciful to us during the liturgy?
6. What do your discoveries suggest about how we can be like the Father? Are there any aspects of God's mercy that we can't imitate?
7. Has anyone you know been merciful to you? How?
8. What one thing can you do at school this week to be merciful to a classmate, teacher or friend?



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