



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME



UNIT 14

The Liturgy of the Word

AIMS

1. To reflect on the Liturgy of the Word as a time to **listen** to God's word from the Bible
2. To become familiar with the different readings, responses and other prayers in the Liturgy of the Word.

KEY WORDS

- LITURGY OF THE WORD
- FIRST READING
- PSALM
- SECOND READING
- ACCLAMATION
- GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION

Begin by asking children if they remember what was the theme of the last session. Allow time for the children to share what they remember about the Mass especially the Introductory rite and revise the main points using the display poster used in the previous session. You may wish to take some time to have a quick look at their worksheets from the last session.

Say that in today's session we are going to talk about the LITURGY OF THE WORD (Show Flash-card)

RESOURCES

- Flash cards with the Key words shown above.
- Missalets used in the parish church.
- Display/poster for Key words
- Worksheet 14

MAIN

- Point out that when we meet friends we talk to them and we also listen to them. It's a two way relationship. Ask children to give examples about how could we LISTEN to our friend Jesus talking to us. Elicit the fact that one of the main ways is by reading or listening to readings from the Bible. This is what we do in the LITURGY OF THE WORD. Show the BIBLE and briefly explain that this is our special Book in which we find **God's written word** and that it is made up of 73 (shorter) books organised in the Old and the New Testaments.
- Talk about the various readings read during the Mass. First comes the FIRST READING. This is usually taken from the Old Testament. The reader starts by proclaiming the book from which the reading is taken. For example: A reading from the prophet Isaiah. (During the Easter season this reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles). If available a missalet could be given to every child to be able to follow the different readings and prayers referred to about in this session. At the end of the reading the reader says, 'The Word of the Lord'. We respond 'Thanks be to God.' We thank God for speaking to us. This is followed by the PSALM. We repeat the response after each verse. Using the missalet you could practice and read the psalm for that Sunday. The SECOND READING then follows. This is usually taken from the New Testament, usually from the letters of the Apostles. Point out that at times some Bible readings may be difficult to understand. Many parishes organise the Sunday Liturgy for children or provide simplified missaletes for children. We then stand to greet the Gospel. The GOSPEL ACCLAMATION is sung or read. The priest then reads the GOSPEL. Briefly talk about the 4 Gospel writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John - four people who wrote about Jesus from different points of view. Using the missalet practice the responses at the beginning and at the end of the Gospel reading too. After the Gospel we usually sit for the HOMILY. This is when the priest talks to us to help us understand the Bible readings better and to show how we should put what God says to us in real life situations.
- We then stand for the CREED. We say the Creed to profess what we believe in. Go through the it using the missalet or the Prayer Book and briefly talk about the main statements.
- The last part of the Liturgy of the Word is when we pray the BIDDING PRAYERS or PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL. These are our invocations to God - we ask him to help us in all our needs and may be related to the day's liturgy.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Put the Bible in a central prominent place or on a lectern. Light a candle and explain this is to show our respect to the written word of God. Read the passage of Martha and Mary (see worksheet side B) and briefly comment on Jesus' words and his wish for people to listen to his word.

Invite children to come forward to kiss the Bible as a sign of their wish to listen and follow what God says in it.

NOTES

As this Unit is often covered after Easter, links could be made with the Liturgical Season: Easter Tide. Jesus is alive and wants to be with us. During the Mass he is with us through his Word and in Holy Eucharist.

ACTIVITY

Remind children about the importance of taking part in the celebration of the Mass every Sunday. Ask questions about ways how we 'take part' in this celebration. Invite them to pay more attention to the readings at mass on the coming Sunday and to talk to their parents and other family members about them.

Hand out Worksheet 14 and briefly talk about how to use the clues to complete the crossword about the Liturgy of the Word.