

Fifth Sunday of the Year

Be a light in the darkness

INTRODUCTION

Without light in our world there would be no life. In some parts of the world, like Antarctica, the sun does not shine for six months of the year. Here, when it grows dark each day, we go to bed and sleep until the rising sun makes it light again. Today Jesus reminds us of the importance of light in our lives.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Together we will say our candle prayer as we remember that Jesus wants each of us to shine like a candle in the darkness. Say Candle Prayer 1.

SORRY

As we sing our sorry song together help us to remember the words of the prayer that Jesus himself taught us: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Sing Sorry Song 4.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 2.

GOSPEL (MATTHEW 5:15-16)

One day Jesus said: "No one lights a lamp and then covers it up, because then they could not see in the darkness. They put the lamp up high so that its rays shine out! You are like lamps, with the brightness of God's love and goodness shining out from you. When you are good, you will bring light into the world around you, and others will see you and thank God for sharing his goodness."

DISCUSSION

If possible, darken the room and turn on a flashlight. Then ask one of the children to cover it up. What difference does the light make in the room?

Uncover the flashlight and shine it slowly around the room on objects or people that the

children can name. "Touch" each child with the ray of light and explain that, in a similar way, our "light"—the goodness in each one of us—can shine out and touch the lives of others. Turn the lights back on.

We heard at the beginning how Antarctica experiences darkness for six months of the year. (Use a globe or an atlas to show the children where Antarctica is.) What would the weather be like in such place where there is no sunlight? (Use any pictures you can find of the polar regions.) Would many plants and animals be able to survive?

Without light it is very difficult for things to live. It is cold and dark, and there is little to eat. What can we use to "make" light? What happens when we have a blackout, and all the lights go out?

Jesus used this story to make it clear that the light that we are given at our baptism should be shared with others. It will help them to "see" more clearly and make our world a better place to live!

ACTIVITY

Have circles or rectangles of black paper cut out in the shape of a candle and flame. The children can stick squares of tissue paper over the back to make lanterns and hang as mobiles.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

At baptism, we became children of God,
filled with the light of his spirit.

Help us to always walk
as children of the light,
touching the lives of others
with God's love.

