

Year C

Twenty-First Sunday of the Year

Few will be chosen

INTRODUCTION

At the end of time, God will welcome all those who have been chosen to take their place with him in heaven.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light the candles, we listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah:

The world was full of darkness and shadows, but now it is filled with light so everyone can see. God sent us his only son to fill our world with peace and love. (Isaiah 9:1-2, 6)

SORRY

God will forgive us just as we forgive others. The number of times he will forgive us cannot be counted because his forgiveness is neverending. In the following reading Jesus reminds Peter of this:

One day Peter asked Jesus, "How many times must I forgive someone who wrongs me? Would I have to forgive as many times as seven in a row?" Jesus answered, "Not just seven times, Peter, but more than seventy times seven, for you must forgive from your heart."

(Matthew 18:21-22, 35)

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

Proclaim the good news to the world.

Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL (LUKE 13:22-30)

On the way to Jerusalem, someone stopped Jesus and asked, "Master, will many be saved at the end of time?" Jesus answered, "Many will try to enter the kingdom of God, but few will succeed; some will leave it too late and find they have missed their chance of everlasting happiness. So take care and be ready! At the end of time, people will be called from far and wide to rejoice in God's heavenly kingdom."

DISCUSSION

Jesus showed us the way to God's kingdom by his actions and words. If we live in God's way, then we will share everlasting happiness with him at the end of time. This is not easy to do, and throughout our lives we will often fail and make mistakes. With God's help we can carry on, but many will turn away or give up altogether.

No one knows when Jesus will return, and he told many parables to explain that we must always be ready for this moment (e.g., the parable of the watchful servants, Luke 12:35-40; the parable of the wise bridesmaids, Matthew 25:1-13).

We must make each day of our life pleasing to God, instead of promising to be good tomorrow or next week or sometime after. If we do not try now, then we might miss our chance of happiness.

Can anyone belong to the kingdom of God? Jesus taught us that God is our father and that we are all brothers and sisters in the one family of God. At the end of time, God will gather his children from all the nations, whatever their color or language, to take their place in his kingdom. They will deserve their place because of the goodness and the love in their lives.

What must each of us try to do today and every day? To be ready to greet Jesus when he returns, by living each day as well as we possibly can! One good way of doing this is to say a "morning offering," a special prayer in which we offer all our thoughts and actions in the coming day to God.

ACTIVITY

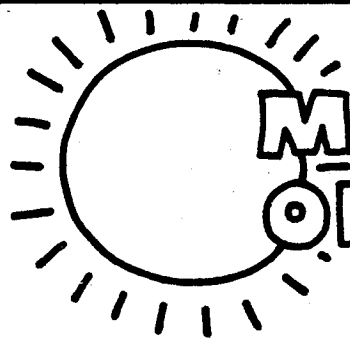
Make copies of the morning offering prayer to be read aloud together before being colored.

CREED

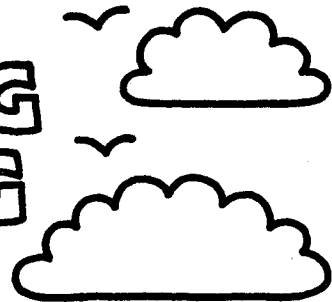
CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help us to live in God's way
and always be ready to greet you.

Though we make many mistakes,
grant us your forgiveness
and pour your grace into our hearts
to make us strong again.



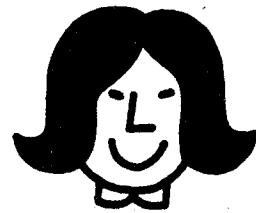
MORNING OFFERING



Father in Heaven



I give you today,
all that I think,
and do, and say.



I give you the good times
as well as the bad,
the times when I'm happy,
the times when I'm sad.



Fill me with grace
and make me strong.



With you at my side
I won't go wrong.



Amen.

