

Seventh Sunday of the Year

Love your enemies

INTRODUCTION

After David, the shepherd boy, had killed the giant Goliath, he went to live at King Saul's palace. Everyone loved David because he was brave and good, and before long, King Saul became jealous and decided to kill him. David managed to escape into the desert, but King Saul and his army followed him there.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Read this prayer aloud:

Heavenly father,
may the light of your love
shine out in our lives
and show others the way to you.

SORRY

Ask a child to choose a "sorry color," and after a few moments of quiet reflection, read the prayer aloud together.

GLORIA

ACCLAMATION

Lord, fill our hearts with love and forgiveness.
Open our ears and help us to listen.

READING (1 SAMUEL 26:2-23)

King Saul and his army set off into the desert to look for David. One night, while Saul and his soldiers slept, David crept into the king's tent. Stuck in the ground by the sleeping king was a spear, but David did not strike his enemy. Taking the spear with him, he crept out of the enemy camp. In the morning, David called out in a loud voice, "King Saul, where is your spear?"

The spear was gone, and the king knew then that David had spared his life. Feeling sorry and ashamed, Saul led his army home and left David alone.

DISCUSSION

Why did Saul want to kill David? David was pop-

ular and well-liked by everyone, and Saul became jealous and afraid that David would take his place as king. He decided that he would get rid of David by killing him.

When David escaped into the desert, Saul and his army followed David to hunt him down and kill him. What did David do when he had the chance to kill his enemy?

David always tried to live in God's way, being ready to forgive others and being kind even when they treated him badly. Saul was his enemy, but David wished him no harm. By showing Saul his mercy, he hoped that they could make peace.

When Saul realized that David had spared his life, the forgiveness and love which David had shown made the king feel ashamed of his own jealousy and wickedness. Because David had been merciful and ready to love his enemy, the king was ready to make peace and follow his example.

Jesus told us to love our enemies and do good to those who hate us. We must try to see some goodness in them and surprise them with our kindness. Just as we treat others with forgiveness and without judging them, so will our heavenly father treat us.

ACTIVITY

Copy the pictures depicting the story of David and Saul. These can be cut up to make booklets or used as a single sheet.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, help us to be brave
and merciful like David,
who was ready to forgive his enemy
and show him a new way.
Give us the courage and strength
to do what we know is right.

