

Ninth Sunday of the Year

The faithful centurion

INTRODUCTION

Everyone, including the Roman soldiers, had heard of the marvelous things which Jesus of Nazareth had done. One of these soldiers, a centurion, asked Jesus one day to help his favorite servant, who was dying.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and say Candle Prayer 3.

SORRY

Lord, you are always there when we need you,
despite what we have done wrong.

Please forgive us and help us to try again
because of our love for you.

(Allow the children a few moments to speak to
God in their hearts.)

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

Come to us, Lord!

Open our ears and our hearts
to hear and understand your word.

Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL (LUKE 7:1-10)

While Jesus was in Capernaum, some of the Jews came to him to ask for help. They had been sent by a Roman centurion whose favorite servant was very ill and close to death. "Jesus, please help this man, because he has always been fair and kind to us," they said.

Jesus went with them, but on the way, they were met by some of the soldier's friends with a message for Jesus from the centurion: "Jesus, do not put yourself to any trouble for my sake, because I am not good enough to expect you to come to me. I am a soldier, and I obey my orders just as my men obey me. Whatever I tell them to do, they will do it. If you will just give the order, I know that my servant will be well again."

Jesus was amazed by the centurion's faith in his power and said, "Few people have shown such great trust in me." When the centurion's friends returned to his house they found great rejoicing because the servant had completely recovered.

DISCUSSION

What was a Roman centurion? A centurion was an officer in the Roman army who commanded a unit of one hundred soldiers. Whatever orders he gave were carried out by his men. (If possible show the children a picture of Roman soldiers.)

The centurion wanted Jesus to help his favorite servant, who was dying. Without hesitating, Jesus went at once to help the dying servant. He was always ready to help anyone who needed him whatever nationality they happened to be.

What message did the centurion send to Jesus? He told Jesus that he did not deserve to have a man of such goodness coming to him, and he felt humble and unworthy. The centurion trusted in Jesus so much that he believed a simple command would cure his servant.

Do you recognize in which part of the Mass we remember the story of the faithful centurion? As we prepare to receive communion we ask Jesus to forgive us and to come to us in a special way as we pray together, "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed."

Like the centurion, we feel humble and undeserving of Jesus' goodness. But in our faith, we trust and believe that Jesus has the power to make us better people and to fill us with his love and goodness.

ACTIVITY

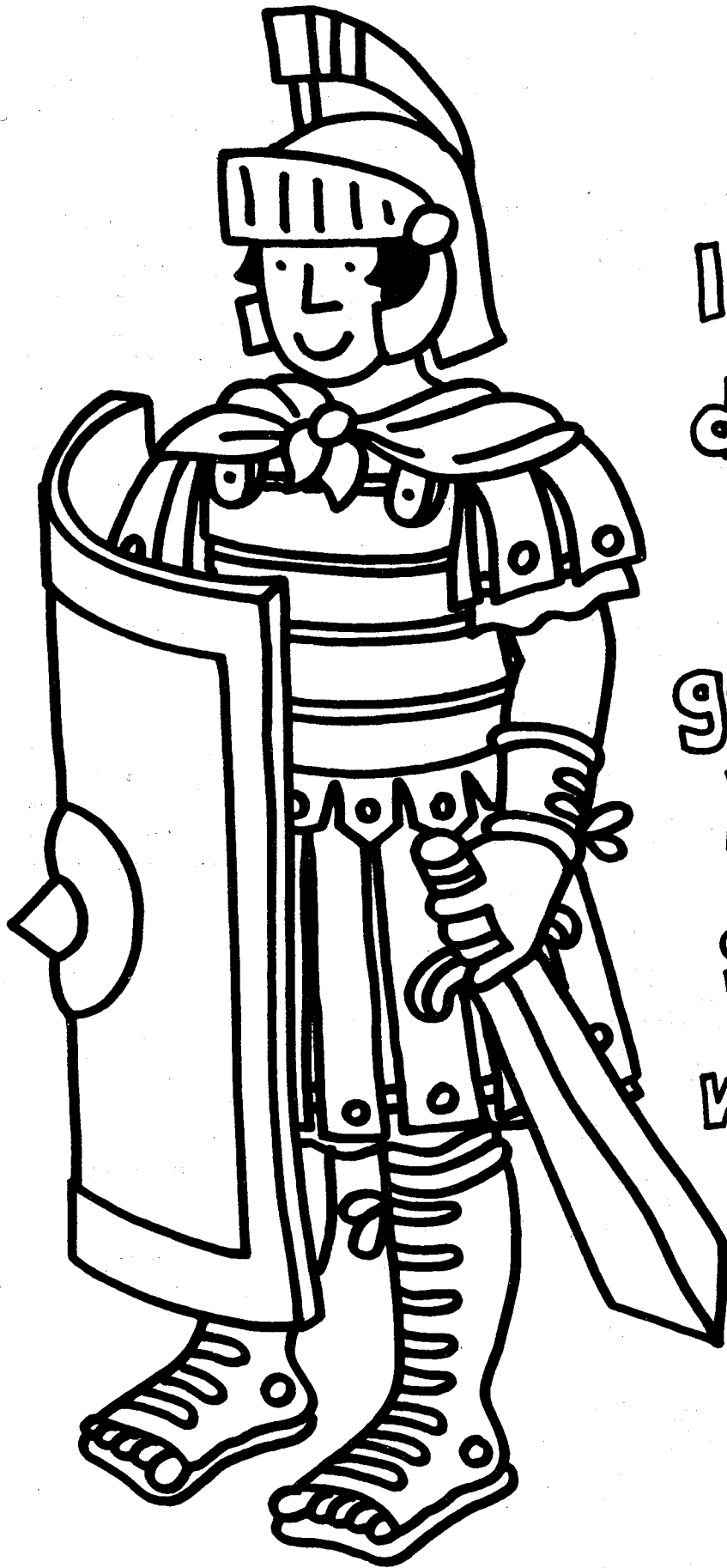
Copy or trace the picture of the Roman centurion for the children to color and keep.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, whenever we need you,
you are always there to help us.

May our faith be as strong
as the Roman centurion's
who placed all his trust in you.



Lord,
I do not
deserve
your
goodness,
but only
say the
word and
it shall
be done