

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A

Focus: Welcome

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about the sparrows and how God cared about even the tiniest things in his world and how he will always take care of us. This week we will talk about how Jesus wants us to care for, not just our family and friends, but everyone in his world.*

Opening Prayer

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

God in heaven, we are more precious to you than any other creature you have made. When we feel ashamed to say we love you, make us proud. May the teachings of Jesus be our guide and our strength. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Song/Movement (can hand out attendance stickers at this time)

“Trust and Obey” 25 Sunday School Songs

When we walk with the Lord
In the light of His word
What a glory He sheds on our way
When we do His good will
He abides with us still
And with all who will
Trust and obey

Chorus

Trust and obey
For there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus
But to trust and obey

Then in fellowship sweet
We will sit at his feet
Or we'll walk by His side in the way
What He says we will do
Where He sends we will go
Never fear only trust and obey

Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

“Whoever receives you receives me”

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *Anyone who makes a person feel welcome or like they belong, will be welcomed by God. Do you let your brother or sister play with you in your room? Do you let kids on the playground play with you as part of your group even if you don't know them? Let's all try to be aware of making others feel like they are welcome or belong with us. If we do this God will reward us by making others welcome us and we will feel loved.*

Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *“Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it.”*

"He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward.

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Adult Reflection on Reading:

Put God first, welcome all and you will be rewarded. To do that we must live by his rules, commandments. Let's face it, we are human. We have human emotion and drive that, at times is in conflict with the way God wants us to live. We have to live with other humans who maybe aren't that welcoming, yet God's message is put my way first and the rewards will follow. God created us and knows how hard his way of life is. Just think about it, God sent his only son to this earth as an example to us. Jesus carried the cross that his father asked him to carry. And the beautiful part is that Jesus was sent to us as a human so we KNOW he felt conflict and emotion just like we do. I let that mean something in my life, it blows me away in fact. So, today I am reminded to welcome with open arms anyone that crosses my path whether it be my child, my husband, a begger, the president, someone I don't necessarily like, all as if they were one person. I should treat everyone in a warm and friendly manner. Maybe they in turn will do the same having a good example to remember.

Gospel Activity

See the Filler Options Sheet if you need more activities.

Welcome Mat

Have you ever seen one of these? Where have you seen something like this? Usually we'd see a mat like this outside the door to our home, wouldn't we? A mat such as this usually has two purposes. Do you know what those two purposes are?

Well, for one thing, it is a friendly reminder for people to wipe their shoes off so that they won't track dirt or mud into your home. And second, it is placed outside your door as a sign to let people know that they are welcome in your home.

Welcome -- what does the word "welcome" mean? It means to receive someone in a warm and friendly way. Are people always welcome in our homes? Do we welcome people into our home if their skin is a different color from ours? Do we welcome people into our homes if they don't have as much money as we do?

How about in our church? Do you think that we make everyone feel welcome in our church? Do we speak to those people who are visiting our church that we do not know? If someone comes to our church and they are not dressed the way we are dressed, do we make sure that they are made to feel welcome?

Jesus said, "He who receives you receives me." If we turn that around, we will understand that if we do not welcome others into our homes and into our churches, it is the same as if we are refusing to welcome Jesus. We wouldn't do that, would we?

Well, let's put the welcome mat out -- and let's be sure that we mean it!

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "We Believe!")

Ask: *Do we believe in God, who sees everything and understands what is in our hearts?*

Do we believe in Jesus, who teaches us to trust in God?

Do we believe in the Holy Spirit, who gives us the courage to be strong in our faith?

Sending Forth

Say: *Now when you go tis week try to welcome someone or make them feel comfortable. Remember treat others as you would want them to treat you.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "This Little Light of Mine" track 10 from 25 Sunday School Songs while children put away any materials and line up. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.