



Sunday Gospel Background

Sunday's Gospel compares the Last Judgment to a shepherd separating sheep from goats. The shepherd distinguishes the sheep by their merciful actions. The sheep are people who have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, sheltered the stranger, clothed the naked, and visited the sick and imprisoned. Here, Jesus offers us a clear message for how we should treat others.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together:** "God, we praise and thank you for everything you have made, from A to Z." (Take turns mentioning people and things beginning with each letter of the alphabet.) After each one, say "thank you God," together. Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.
- Cover Activity • Loving Actions Show Mercy (page 1)** Read aloud the directions for the activity and give your child time to complete it. **Answer:** *mercy*. Help your child make the connection that our loving actions are ways to show mercy to others.
- Story • Martin the Shoemaker** (based on "Where Love Is, God Is" by Leo Tolstoy) Read or tell this story:

Once upon a time, a shoemaker named Martin lived in a small town in Russia. Martin was lonely. His wife and only son had died. He felt he had no one left to love and no one who loved him. One day, a friend said, "Martin, why don't you try reading the Bible? I think that will give you hope." That night, Martin read about Jesus healing a sick person, going to Zacchaeus' house for dinner, and bringing a girl back to life. When he closed the Bible, Martin said to himself, "If only I could meet Jesus!" Then he fell asleep.

Martin dreamed that Jesus smiled at him and said, "Martin, I will come to see you tomorrow." Martin woke up all excited. He made sure he had some food to offer Jesus. Then he opened his shop and began to wait for Jesus to come. He kept looking out the window. It started to snow. Martin noticed an old man in a raggedy coat, sweeping the snow off the sidewalks. The man had no gloves, and his shoes were held together with rope. Martin invited him inside for a cup of hot tea and something to eat. The man came in, stayed awhile, and ate three muffins. Martin gave him an old pair of boots and some warm gloves. The man thanked him and went back out to sweep with a smile.

Martin went back to work. The next time he looked up, he saw a woman with a baby. The woman was standing against the wall by his shop, trying to keep out of the wind. She was shivering because she had wrapped her jacket around her baby. Martin said to her, "Please bring your baby in to get warm." While the woman sat by his little stove and warmed up, Martin got a beautiful wool coat from his closet. "Please take this coat," Martin said. "It was my wife's, but she is dead. She would want you to have it." Martin slipped a few coins in the pocket as he helped the woman put the coat on.

"Where is Jesus?" Martin wondered. He locked his door, lit a lamp, and sat down with the Bible. Then he heard a voice calling his name. It was Jesus! Martin jumped up. "Where are you, Jesus?" he cried. A light shone through the window. Just like in a movie or a dream, Martin saw the snow sweeper working, smiling happily because of his new boots and warm gloves. He saw the woman in the coat he had given her. Her baby was tucked inside the coat with his smiling face showing. "I did come to see you today," Jesus said to Martin. "What you did for these people in need, you did for me."



- Discuss the story using these *Know* questions: How did Jesus visit Martin? How do you think Martin's life changed after Jesus' visit?

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Teaches the Works of Mercy (page 4)** Proclaim the Gospel by dividing up the reading parts. Encourage your child to listen closely to learn more about mercy and how Jesus wants us to show it to others.
- Discuss the *Know* question related to the Gospel. Then ask: How can we show love to Jesus today? Explain that the examples Jesus gives in the Gospel are called the Works of Mercy. A work is something we do, an action. The Works of Mercy are actions Jesus wants us to do to care for other people and show them mercy.
- Connecting Gospel and Doctrine (page 4)** Read together "Loving as Jesus Does." Emphasize that what we do for others, we do for Jesus. (Don't forget to read aloud the quote from Saint John Vianney about the Mass too!)



- Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 45. Call your child's attention to the blue box. Explain that Corporal Works of Mercy are ways we care for the physical needs of others. Ask: How can our family do the Corporal Works of Mercy? Explain that we also care of one another's spiritual and emotional needs by doing the Spiritual Works of Mercy. Read aloud the list. Ask: How can our family do the Spiritual Works of Mercy? Encourage your child to look for ways to do Works of Mercy every day.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Good News, page 3.

- Catholic Faith Words • mercy, Works of Mercy (page 3)** Review the meaning of the word *mercy*. Read aloud the definition of *Works of Mercy*. Ask: What Works of Mercy did Martin the cobbler do? *He gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and clothes to the naked. Even though the people weren't naked, they didn't have enough clothes for the cold weather.*

Live the Gospel

- Activity • We Do the Works of Mercy Game (page 2-3)** Read aloud the directions for the game and play it with your child.
- Closing Prayer** "Thank you, Lord, for all the good people around us who help us see Jesus in those in need and who reach out to help them. Help us to show our care for others too. Amen."



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture