

## GOD CALLED OUR FATHERS

### UNIT ONE: Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham.

#### Lesson 1: Jesus Taught Us to Say Father

##### CONTENT:

1. Jesus taught us to say 'Father' to God. Because Jesus is the true Son of God, he was able to give us this privilege. [CCC2765,2780-83, 2796]
2. At my Baptism I became a child of God and he adopted me into his family. [CCC 2782]
- 😊 3. Because he is our Father, we should try and act like him. [CCC 2784]
- 😊 4. 'Hallowed be Thy Name' means that we ask God to help us to be holy (hallowed=holy) so that his name is respected and praised by us and by everyone else too. For when we behave badly we bring dishonour to our Father, whereas when we act well he is glorified. [CCC 2814]

**ASSIGNMENT:** Read handout at home. Discuss with your family and list 3 ways we can be like our Father in heaven.

**REFERENCES:** Luke 11:2-4; Matthew 6:9-13.CCC 2765; 2780-84; 2814. [Lesson1, Unit1 Std1]

#### I. STARTER:

- Do you know what 'adopt' means? *[It means that a man and his wife choose a baby or a child to be their own. They become the daddy and mummy of the child and look after him (or her).]*
- Last year you heard the story of Peter and his father and mother, who adopted a little boy from the village. The boy's name was Ajit. Does anyone remember the story?

*[The children tell the story if they are able. Otherwise, recapitulate it briefly thus:]*

Peter and his father and mother lived happily on their farm in the hills. When they went down to the village they noticed Ajit, who used to sit all alone. When Ajit's 'naani' died they took him home and adopted him as their own child. Mr. Dias, the father, put a gold chain round Ajit's neck with his new name on it: Ajit Dias. Peter was very, very happy because he had been hoping and dreaming that Ajit would become his brother.

#### II. DEVELOPMENT:

**STORY:** Ajit Learns a Lesson

Now I'll tell you some more of the same story. Peter and Ajit's father, Mr. Dias was a very good man. He wanted to help the poor villagers and make them happy. He planned to start a school for the children and a hospital for those who got sick. But to do this he had to become the headman of the village (just as we have a class monitor and a head boy of our school).

Every day Mr Dias would go down to the village after finishing his farm work and talk to the villagers: the farmers, the bhajiwallis, shop-keepers. He would ask them to vote for him. (Do you know what 'vote' means? It means you have to choose a good person and write his or her name on a paper. All the papers are counted and the one with the most votes becomes the leader.) The villagers thought it was a good idea to have Mr Dias as their head. "Achhaa aadmi hai. Hamein madad kareinge!" they said.

One day Peter said to their father, "Can we also come with you to the village? We have finished all our work." Daddy said yes, so off they went. Now that day Ajit was in a bad mood. He was angry because Daddy had scolded him in the morning. So instead of walking with them, he walked very slowly and soon he was far behind. He was grumbling to himself, "He's not really my daddy, that's why he shouts at me. He only likes Peter." He was making such a grumpy face, that one of the boys of the village started laughing at him. Ajit picked up a stone and threw it at him. Then he ran to hide behind his father.

They reached the market place. As Daddy and Peter smiled and said 'Namasthe! Namasthe!' to people, Ajit stood behind so that Daddy wouldn't see, stuck his tongue out and said, "Chamachte! Chamachte!"

Then some more 'masthi': He saw a cart with ripe mangoes. Quietly, he took some mangoes, hid them in his pocket and then as they walked along he ate the mangoes and threw the skin and seeds at the dogs, goats, even children whom they passed on the road.

After going through the village, the three of them turned around and started walking back. As they reached the market, Peter noticed a group of villagers talking and looking at them. When they came near, Mr. Dias smiled and said, "Namasthe!" but no one answered him. They just turned away. Then... 'THUK!' a stone came flying in the air and almost hit his head. Peter looked quickly and saw a boy hiding behind a tree.

"What's happening? I thought they like Daddy. Why is everyone acting like this suddenly?" Peter wondered. Then he saw Ajit's face. Ajit was looking scared and ashamed.

When they reached home, Peter asked him quietly, "Ajit, do you know why the villagers were not wishing Daddy? And why that boy threw a stone at us?"

"Yes I know." Ajit said. "It's because of me. Your daddy scolded me, so I was angry. That's why I did lots of bad things."

Peter put his hand on Ajit's shoulder. "Why are you saying 'your daddy'? He's your father also and he loves you very much. A father has to scold his son when he's naughty." He lifted the gold chain round Ajit's neck. "See what's written here? Ajit Dias! That means you are a Dias now and he is your father."

Ajit began to cry. He said, "What a bad boy I've been today. Now no one will vote for Daddy... All because of me."

Peter said, "Don't cry. You can try again tomorrow." Ajit stopped crying. He thought for a while, then he said, "You watch me tomorrow, Peter. I'm going to be just like my father."

The next day, Ajit dressed up in his white kurta-pyjama, just like his daddy was wearing. He combed his hair just like Daddy. As they went through the village, he copied everything Daddy did. He walked like Daddy. He smiled like Daddy. When Daddy said 'Namasthe' to a shopkeeper, he bowed his head politely and said 'Namasthe' in exactly the same way. When Daddy put his hand in his pocket and put some money into a beggar's bowl, Ajit also put his hand into his pocket. He only found a marble and a chocolate, but he put those in the beggar's bowl.

Peter was watching everything. He heard a bhajiwalli say, "Good father and good son too!" Peter smiled. He said, "Now I'm sure Daddy will win the votes and become the village headman!" He was right.

## NEXT CLASS:

[Recapitulate the story briefly by asking the following questions:]

- Why did the people of the village stop wishing Mr. Dias? *[Because they had seen his son Ajit behaving badly.]*
  - What did Peter tell Ajit when they got home? [Two children could enact the conversation.]
  - The next day, what did Ajit do to copy his father? *[He dressed, smiled, walked and talked like him. He put something in the beggar's bowl.]*
  - When the bhajiwalli saw Ajit behaving politely, what did she say? *['Good father and good son too!']*
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- Ajit's story is just like our story. Can you guess how?
    - God the Father had his own real son, Jesus. (Like Peter was Mr. Dias' real son.) but he adopted us and made us his sons and daughters.
    - Sometimes like Ajit, we think "God doesn't really love me. He's not really my father." When we think like this we may not act like his children.
    - If we behave badly, then people think badly of God our Father.
    - But if we think, "God really loves me. He is my Father" then we would behave like him and everyone would praise God.

- Let me tell you another short story from the Bible.

One day, Jesus was sitting by himself and praying. His friends were watching him. They thought, "The way Jesus prays is so different. He's not just saying prayers. He seems to be really talking to someone, and that someone seems to be a nice person. Let's ask him to teach us to pray in the same way."

So when Jesus had opened his eyes and got up, they went to him and said, "Will you teach us to pray just as you pray?"

Jesus said, "Yes, of course I will. Come and sit down and listen. First of all, remember that God is your Father. He is a kind, loving and good father. So when you pray, think of your father in heaven and say, 'Our Father in heaven.'"

Then say, "Hallowed by your name." God is holy and good, so everyone should treat him in the right way. If all of you act like your Father in heaven, then everyone will think well of him.

When Jesus' friends heard this, they were happy. (Like Ajit was happy after Peter talked to him.) They started thinking of God as their father. And they tried to act like their Father too.

[Give out handouts at this point. Read the written matter aloud with the children repeating the words. Explain the meaning of the prayer as shown in the handout. The children could then colour the pictures, if they like.]

### III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

[Encourage the children to settle down and lead them to pray thus:]

Close your eyes. Imagine Jesus is holding your hand and taking you to God the Father. He is kind and good and loving. Look at the Father and say,

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name.

Now in your mind promise God that you will try to be just like him, so that everyone will think good things about him.

#### Home assignment:

Read handout at home. Discuss with your family and list 3 ways we can be like our Father in heaven.