


HOW GOD SAVED HIS PEOPLE

UNIT ONE: God Rescued His People

Lesson 2:**Dominic Savio: A Saint and Missionary**

CONTENT:

1. Dominic Savio was a boy who helped save other children: He helped to save their souls for Jesus.
2. Dominic lived in Italy, about 150 years ago. He liked to study as well as to play. Most of all he loved God and to serve at Mass.
3. One day he met Fr. John Bosco and asked him if he could join his boarding school. From Don Bosco he learnt how to be a saint.
4. Dominic was a good friend to his companions. Once he stopped two boys who were going to have a 'rock-throwing fight'.
5. Dominic would often invite his friends to church to pray. He loved Mary in a special way. He knew that Mary helps people to follow Jesus.
-  6. We too can be like Dominic and become holy. We can love God and also lead other children closer to God by our example and by inviting them to love God and pray to him.

ASSIGNMENT: Read handout at home. Prepare for the act.

REFERENCES: Life of Dominic Savio, by Fr. John Bosco. CCC 851, 968, 969, 2013-14, 2044.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts. Props for skits.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY: Children could make posters using any one of Dominic's sayings.

Eg. 'My best friends will be Jesus and Mary.' These could be displayed in the school.

NB. This lesson reinforces the aim of the Missionary Childhood Association. Through the story of Dominic Savio the aspect of "Children Helping Children" to come closer to God is strengthened.

I. STARTER:

- Last time we learnt the prayer of the Missionary Childhood Club. Hands up those who have been saying it every day! Do you say it with your family? Can anyone say the prayer without looking at the paper?

[Let a few children attempt to say it, then all pray the prayer together.]

- In this prayer we ask someone to pray for us. Whose help do we ask? *[Mother Mary's]*
- God wants all of us to be missionaries. What does he want us to do? What does a missionary do? *[God wants us to share Jesus with other children, so that they can also love him and enjoy his love.]*

II. DEVELOPMENT:

- Today we will hear the story of a boy who loved God very much and tried his best to bring his friends to Jesus. His name was Dominic. I will tell you a few stories about him, and later we will act them. Pay attention to them, so that you will remember and be able to act well.

[Divide the class into 4 groups and allot the stories by numbers (Nos. 1-4) to them, so that they will pay better attention.]

STORY: Dominic Savio: A Saint and Missionary

1. Dominic Savio lived in Italy about 150 years ago. He was the second child of his parents and he had 10 brothers and sisters. Dominic loved to study and though his school was very far away, he would happily walk all the way to school and back. He walked 12 miles every day.

One hot day a farmer saw him and asked him,

“Aren’t you afraid to walk so far on this lonely road?”

“I’m not alone! My guardian angel is with me!”

“But don’t you find it tiring walking in the hot sun?”

“I’m doing it for a Master who pays well!”

“Who is your master?”

“God is my master! He rewards those who do anything for him!”

Dominic knew that God and the angels were with him, even though he couldn’t see them.

2. In those days children received their First Holy Communion when they were twelve years old. But Dominic was only seven and could not think of waiting for so long. He was longing to receive Jesus. The parish priest saw how he came every day to serve at Mass, so he said, “Dominic, since you love Jesus so much, I think you are ready to receive him. You can join the other big children and make your First Communion.”

Dominic ran home shaking with excitement to tell his mother the news.

“Mama! I can receive Jesus! Father said yes! How lucky I am!”

He went off to read the Bible and pray, so that he could get ready.

The day before the big day he went to his mother and said,

“Mama, please forgive me for anything I have done to make you sad. I promise that I am going to be much better from now on.”

The next day he got dressed in his best clothes and went so early that there was no one else around. He knelt down outside the door of the church and prayed till the church doors were opened. At last He got his greatest wish and received Jesus. He said, “This is the happiest day of my whole life.”

That day he wrote down in his little book:

My promises to God:

1. I will go for Confession and Holy Communion as often as I can.
2. I will keep Sundays and holy days only for God.
3. My best friends will be Jesus and Mary.
4. Death, but not sin.

Till the day he died, Dominic kept his promises.

3. Dominic got another great wish: When he was 12 years old, Don Bosco took him to study and live in his school. Don Bosco helped him to love God and become holy.

While he was living at Don Bosco’s school something bad happened. Two of his friends got very angry with each other and decided to have a rock fight. When Dominic heard about it he was very upset. He knew that they could get badly hurt or even die in the fight. He tried his best to talk to his friends.

“If you have such a fight, you will hurt each other very badly. Forget it and forgive each other.”

“Keep out of it! We know what we are doing!”

“I will not give up till I have smashed his head.”

Suddenly Dominic got an idea. He said,

“I give up. Fight, if you have to. But I want you to agree to just one condition.”

“What condition? Are you going to trick us?”

“I’ll just show you the starting place to throw your stones.” The boys agreed.

When they reached the place, both the boys collected big piles of stones and got ready to attack. Dominic got up and stood between them. He held up a crucifix (a cross with Jesus on it) and said, “This is the condition: Before you throw any stones at each other, look at this crucifix and throw the first stone at me. As you throw it say, ‘Jesus died forgiving his enemies. And I am going to make him sad by fighting.’ ”

Dominic went to the bigger boy and said, “Come on! Throw the first stone at me!”

But the boy began to shake. He said,

“No! I don’t want to fight with you. I would fight anyone who tries to hurt you.”

Then Dominic went to the other boy. “You start then. Throw a stone at me.”

But he also could not. The boys realised how they were hurting God by fighting. They said sorry to each other and went to confession and asked God to help them change.

4. Dominic was a real missionary. He used to say, “How happy I would be if I could bring all my friends to God!” Whenever he got the chance he would tell his friends stories about God.

One day, after telling a group of children a story, one boy, who liked to joke and didn’t like to be serious said, “Why waste time telling such stories?”

“I tell such stories because God asked us to. And if I save even one person for God I will also be saved.”

Dominic would collect his prizes and gifts carefully, and then use them to help other children to come closer to God. He told a little friend,

“If you learn how to make the Sign of the Cross well, I’ll give you this prize!”

To another boy, “Will you come with me to visit Our Lady and say the rosary?”

“But the church is so cold.”

“Put this on, and come!” Dominic took off his own coat and gave it to his friend.

[Give out handouts and read together. The children get into groups and plan to enact the story allotted to them. They would have to learn the lines from the stories. They could plan to bring any props they would need. E.g. crucifix, ‘stones’ (could be crushed-up paper) etc.]

Home assignment: Read handout at home. Prepare for the act.
--

NEXT CLASS:

[Give the children some time to get ready for the skit, then each group comes forward and acts. Be ready to prompt them if they forget their lines; and be sure to praise and encourage each group for their efforts.]

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- Close your eyes and think about all we have heard just now. Ask God quietly what he would like to teach you through Dominic: In what ways can you be like him.

[Children share. Talk about loving God and helping our friends to come closer to God.]

- Write down one thing you will try to do from today.

[Children write in the space provided in their handouts.]