

GOD THE GOOD SHEPHERD

UNIT TWO: God's Messengers

Lesson 8: Our Good Shepherd Cares for us in the Mass

CONTENT:

1. Like a good shepherd, Jesus is leading us to heaven. At Mass, he talks to us, feeds us and makes us strong. He gave his life to save us from the Enemy.
2. At the Mass:
 - i. We gather together: As a shepherd keeps his sheep together, God gathers us together for this special meal. Jesus himself acts through the priest. [CCC 1348]
 - ii. God speaks to us through the readings and homily. WE believe it is really God who is speaking and we listen attentively (like Samuel). [CCC 1349]
 - iii. We ask God's blessings: We ask God to bless his people (like Queen Esther) This kind of prayer is called Intercession. We pray, trusting in God. [CCC 1349]
 - iv. We bring our offering: God has given us everything, so (Like Abraham, Jacob, Gideon etc) we offer him something in return. At Mass we bring the bread and wine to the altar in a procession. We also give some money to be shared with others. [CCC 1350,51]
 - ☺ v. We thank and praise God: Like the crowd who waved palm branches, we praise God and sing from our hearts. This is because we realise (like Moses) that God is holy and our saviour. [CCC 13452]
 - vi. The bread and wine become Jesus: God can work miracles. (The widow's flour and oil, Cana) As the priest says the words of Jesus at the Last Supper, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus. [CCC 1350]
 - vii. We offer peace: After we say the Our Father, we offer peace to each other and ask Jesus, (the Lamb of God) to take away our sins.
 - viii. We receive Jesus: Realising that Jesus is coming to us, we say (like the officer) 'Lord I am not worthy..' then we go to receive Jesus lovingly. He brings us closer to himself, helps us to stop sinning and to love others. [CCC 1416]
 - ix. God sends us out to give Jesus' message to others (like Jonah) [CCC 849, 1332]

ASSIGNMENT: Read handout at home.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts.

NB. This lesson recapitulates what has been learnt about the Eucharist in the past years, especially Std III and IV. The responses and prayers explained in the lessons are included.

I. STARTER:

[Show a shepherd's crook and rod to the students (or sketch them on the blackboard).

Ask:]

- What are these? Who carries them? What does he use them for? [A shepherd uses his crook to keep his sheep together and his rod to defend them from wild animals.]
- Do you remember any shepherd who took good care of his flock? Later he became king. [David]
- Do you know any other shepherd who is a king? [Jesus] What did Jesus say about being a shepherd? (You learnt that Bible verse) ["I am the Good Shepherd. I lay down my life for the sheep. I know my own and my own know me." John 10:14]
- Where do you think Jesus wants to take his sheep (that is, us)? [To heaven!]



II. DEVELOPMENT:

[On the blackboard, draw the sketch shown alongside.]



- This is a place where Jesus looks after his sheep. He gathers us together, feeds us, talks to us, makes us strong and even saves us here. Can anyone guess what this place is? *[The answer is Mass. The picture drawn spells M-A-S-S.]*
- Even though Jesus does all these things, many people go for Mass and don't meet Jesus and don't get strong. Can you think why? *[Because they don't realise what God is doing and they don't take part in the Mass properly.]*
- Today we'll try to understand the Mass better so that our Good Shepherd can really make us loving and strong and take us safely to heaven.

[Give out the handouts. Go through the first four parts of the Mass, reading the written matter and filling in the missing words. Bring out the following:]

1. WE GATHER TOGETHER:

MISSING WORDS: AND WITH YOUR SPIRIT.

- Why do you think our shepherd gathers us together? *[If a sheep wanders off it can get into trouble. A wild animal may eat it, and the shepherd can't take care of it properly. God wants us to be safe. He wants to take good care of us. That's why he wants us to come together for Mass, specially on Sundays.]*
- Can you see Jesus at Mass? Is he doing anything? *[Jesus is present in the tabernacle, but at Mass, he acts through the priest. We all stand when the priest enters, because he is standing for Jesus. When the priest blesses us, it is Jesus who is doing it. When he lifts up the bread and wine, again, it is Jesus.]*

2. GOD SPEAKS TO US:

MISSING WORDS: SPEAK LORD, YOUR SERVANT IS LISTENING! THANKS BE TO GOD! PRAISE TO YOU LORD JESUS CHRIST!

- How does God talk to us at Mass? *[God speaks through the Bible readings and through the priest when he explains the readings to us.]*
- For which reading do we all stand up? Why? *[For the Gospel. Because in the Gospel we hear what Jesus said and did, and what happened to him.]*
- Do you remember the story of Samuel? When did God give him a message? *[When he realised it was God calling out, and when he said, "Speak Lord your servant is listening."]*

3. WE ASK GOD TO BLESS US:

MISSING WORD: INTERCESSION.

- What did Queen Esther pray for? *[For God to save her people from being killed.]*
- Did God hear her prayer? Why do you think he did? *[Yes God did save them. God is ready to help those who pray humbly and with all their hearts.]*

4. WE BRING OFFERINGS:

MISSING WORDS: SOMEONE CARRIES THE BREAD AND WINE TO THE ALTAR.

- Why did Abraham and Jacob and the others offer sacrifices? *[Often it was just to thank God for all his blessings.]*
- Why should we put something in the offering box? *[Because God has given us everything we have. We show our thanks by giving something back to him. God also wants us to share what he has given us with those who don't have much.]*

NEXT CLASS:

[Go through the remaining parts of the Mass as before.]

5. WE THANK AND PRAISE GOD:

MISSING WORDS: HOLY HOLY HOLY, LORD GOD OF HOSTS, HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY! HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD! HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST!

- Do you remember how Moses took off his sandals and bowed down? *Why did he do that? [Because he realised that God is holy, someone very special, and high above us all.]*
- Many years later the people realised the same thing about Jesus as they entered Jerusalem. What did they do? *[They began to wave branches and shout, Hosanna! Blessed is the he who comes in the name of the Lord!]*
- At Mass we realise that God is great and holy, and that's why we stand and sing, 'Holy, holy...'

6. THE BREAD AND WINE BECOME JESUS:

MISSING WORDS: As the priest says the words that Jesus said at the LAST SUPPER, the bread and wine become the BODY and BLOOD of Jesus.

- We saw that God can really work miracles. He can change water into wine. He made everything out of nothing. That's why we believe that he can change the bread and wine into his own Body and Blood? What was Jesus thinking of when he first said, "This is my Body, this is my Blood"? *[He was thinking of how he would die for all of us.]*
- At Mass, the priest offers God the same precious sacrifice of Jesus, so that our sins are forgiven. What should we do at this time? *[Bow deeply and thank God for what he has done for us.]*

7. WE MAKE PEACE:

MISSING WORDS: LAMB OF GOD, YOU TAKE AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD HAVE MERCY ON US. [2] LAMB OF GOD YOU TAKE AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD, GRANT US PEACE.

- Who is the Lamb of God? *[Jesus]* Why do we call him that? *[Because instead of a sacrificing a lamb, Jesus offered himself for us.]*
- When we offer each other the Sign of Peace, what are we trying to say? *['I want to be friends! I forgive you and I ask you to forgive me.']*

8. WE RECEIVE JESUS:

MISSING WORDS: LORD I AM NOT WORTHY THAT YOU SHOULD ENTER UNDER MY ROOF, BUT ONLY SAY THE WORD AND MY SOUL SHALL BE HEALED.

- What happens if we go to Jesus in a loving way? *[He brings us closer to him, he helps us to stop sinning and to love others more.]*

9. GOD SENDS US OUT:

MISSING WORDS: THANKS BE TO GOD!

- Now we have Jesus with us, how can we share him with others? *[Be kind and loving, pray for others and also tell others about Jesus.]*

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- Let's close our eyes for a minute and thank God for the Mass and for being our Good Shepherd.

[Students talk to God quietly. End by singing the 'Shepherd Song.']

Home assignment: × Read handout at home and learn the prayers.
